
Agenda

Title of meeting: NRW Public Board Meeting

Date of meeting: Wednesday 19th July 2023

Time of meeting: 9:30 – 12:55

Location: Microsoft Teams

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Time	Item
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09:30

5 mins

Item 1. Open Meeting

- Welcome
- Declaration of Interests
- Explain conduct of meeting

Sponsor and Presenter: Sir David Henshaw (Chair)

Summary: To NOTE any declarations of interest.

09:35

5 mins

Item 2. Review Minutes and Action Log

2A. Review Minutes from Public 18th May meeting

2B. Review Public Action Log

Sponsor and Presenter: Sir David Henshaw (Chair)

To APPROVE the minutes of the previous meeting and the action log.

09:40
5 mins

Item 3. Update from the Chair

Sponsor and Presenter: Sir David Henshaw

Summary: To NOTE the Chair's update to the Board.

09:45
20 mins

Item 4. Report from the Chief Executive

Sponsor and Presenter: Clare Pillman, Chief Executive

Summary: To NOTE the current position and update the Board on key activities.

Paper ref: 23-07-B01

10:05
10 mins

Item 5. Update Reports of Committees and Forums

Sponsors and presenters: Committee Chairs

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee – 22nd May and 5th June

Paper ref: 23-07-B02

Evidence Advisory Committee

Finance Committee – 19th June

Paper ref: 23-07-B03

Flood Risk Management Committee – 13th July

Land Estate Committee

People and Customer Committee – 7th June

Paper ref: 23-07-B05

Protected Areas Committee – 23rd June and 29th June

Paper ref: 23-07-B06

Forum Updates

Wales Land Management Forum

Paper ref: 23-07-B07

Wales Fisheries Forum

Wales Water Management Forum

National Access Forum for Wales

Summary: To NOTE the updates from the Board committees, both within and outside of any meetings held.

10:15
15 mins

Item 6. Finance Performance Report

Sponsor: Rachael Cunningham, Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Services

Presenter: Rob Bell, Head of Finance

Summary: To NOTE the latest financial position

Paper ref: 23-07-B09

10:30
20 mins

Item 7. Business Plan Performance Dashboard End of Year Report 2022/23 and Internal Performance Report 2022/3

Sponsor and Presenter: Clare Pillman, Chief Executive
Attendees: Sarah Williams, Head of Corporate Strategy and Programme Management Office; Kirsten Hughes, Lead Specialist Advisor, Corporate Planning & Performance

Summary: To APPROVE the Business Plan Performance Dashboard End of Year Report 2022/23 and Internal Performance Report 2022/3

Paper ref: 23-07-B10

10:50
15 mins

Item 8. Welsh Language Annual Report 2022-23

Sponsor: Prys Davies, Executive Director of Corporate Strategy and Development
Presenters: Sarah Stacey, Head of Organisational Development; Lyn Williams, Specialist Advisor, People Management

Summary: To APPROVE the Welsh Language Annual Report 2022-23

Paper ref: 23-07-B11

11:05
15 mins

Break

11:20
30 mins

Item 9. Draft Business Plan 2023-24

Sponsor: Prys Davies, Executive Director of Corporate Strategy and Development

Presenters: Sarah Williams, Head of Corporate Strategy and Programme Management Office; Kirsten Hughes, Lead Specialist Advisor, Corporate Planning & Performance

Summary: To APPROVE the Draft Business Plan 2023-24

Paper ref: 23-07-B12

11:50
30 mins

Item 10. Summary Reflections on Local Well-being Planning in Wales

Sponsor: Ceri Davies, Executive Director of Evidence, Policy and Permitting

Presenters: Prof Calvin Jones; Fen Turner, Team Leader Natural Resources & Well-being Strategy and Policy; Martyn P Evans, Head of South West Wales Operations; Holly Butterworth, Lead Specialist Advisor: Natural Resources & Well-being

Summary: Reflections – To discuss the summary reflections on local wellbeing planning in Wales, opportunities and risks to NRW

Paper ref: 23-07-B13

12:20
10 mins

Item 11. Board Forward Look

Sponsor: Sir David Henshaw

Presenter: Natalie Williams, Team Leader & Deputy Board Secretary, Board Secretariat

Summary: To DISCUSS the Board Forward Look

Paper ref: 23-07-B14

12:30
5 mins

Item 12. AOB

12:35

End of Meeting

12:35
20 mins

Public Q&A

12:55

End of Public Meeting

Board Meetings

Action No.	Meeting Category	Meeting Date	Item No	Para No	Paper Sponsor	Action	Owner	Due	Status	Notes/Updates
16	Public	27/01/2023	7	32	Rachael Cunningham, Executive Director of FCS	ACTION: FRMC to consider the full costs of the Internal Drainage Districts in conjunction with the Head of Finance	Jeremy Parr, Head of Flood and Incident Risk Management; Rob Bell, Head of Finance	27/09/2023	Ongoing	To be considered at FRMC in October
18	Public	27/01/2023	9	47	Prys Davies, Executive Director of CSD	ACTION: The Head of Governance and Board Secretary to develop the approach to Place-based Board public engagement sessions	Head of Governance & Board Secretary	31/12/2023	Ongoing	Options for Board public engagement being developed. The approach to be agreed with the Chair and the new Head of Governance and Board Secretary.
35	Public	23/03/2023	4	18	Clare Pillman CEO	ACTION: A presentation on the work on minimising pollution to be presented at a future Board meeting	Nadia DeLonghi, Head of Regulation and Permitting; Martin Cox, Head of North Wales Operations	31/08/2023	Ongoing	Noted that the format for this update is under discussion with Ceri Davies and Gareth O'Shea. A strategic session on pollution is planned for the September Board meeting.
37	Public	23/03/2023	8	60	Ceri Davies Executive Director EPP	ACTION: The Principal Advisor, Fisheries, to return to the July Board meeting with suggestions on a radical approach to the plight of the salmon.	Ben Wilson, Principal Advisor, Fisheries	25/09/2023	Ongoing	Revised approach to updates on this subject being considered. Ben Wilson and Ruth Jenkins discussing this. The discussion will take place in PrAC in October.
49	Public	18/05/2023	7	31	Sir David Henshaw Clare Pillman, CEO	ACTION: Team Leader & Deputy Board Secretary, Board Secretariat to contact Board members regarding a mentor for the Board apprentice.	Team Leader, Board Secretariat and Deputy Board Secretary	14/06/2023	Completed	
50	Public	18/05/2023	11	68	Sir David Henshaw	ACTION: Secretariat to send a note to the Board regarding arrangements for the September Board meeting.	Secretariat	14/06/2023	Completed	

NRW Board Paper

Date of meeting:	Wednesday 19 July 2023
Title of Paper:	CEO Report – PUBLIC SESSION
Paper Reference:	23-07-B01
Paper sponsored by:	Clare Pillman, Chief Executive
Paper prepared by:	Clare Pillman, Chief Executive
Paper presented by:	Clare Pillman, Chief Executive
Purpose of the paper	Discussion
Summary	The paper intends to raise awareness of the matters covered

Introduction

1. The period since the last Board meeting has been both very busy and very dry. We have now officially declared a prolonged period of dry weather, with all that entails, and are in constant dialogue with Welsh Government (WG) and the Water Companies. We have seen the longest and most devastating period of wildfires on our Estate for many years (if ever). We will provide updates on these issues at the meeting.
2. More positively, June began with the launch of our Corporate Plan at the Senedd. The event included inspiring speeches from the Minister for Climate Change and the Future Generations Commissioner, Derek Walker. The Minister gave very positive feedback about our Corporate Plan and held it up as an exemplar for other organisations to follow. The event was well attended by a wide range of invited stakeholders and interested parties, with other Members of the Senedd (MSs) dropping in as their schedules allowed.
3. The Corporate Plan has also been the focus for Staff Gatherings at venues across Wales during June. These were designed to bring colleagues together and roll out the new Plan with discussions on our values and insights from our Leadership Team about what the new Plan means to them. I have been repeatedly impressed and moved by these commentaries and I am proud of our Leadership Team for

contributing to the Gatherings in such a thoughtful and positive way. Colleagues also had an opportunity to find out more about our People Transformation Programme, Adfywio and Natur a Ni in a relaxed environment, with the energy and conversations continuing over lunch. Board members have attended many of these sessions, which has been really appreciated by colleagues.

4. I spoke about the new Corporate Plan at a Policy Forum for Wales on 9 June, and have had a good meeting with Wales Environment Link members to discuss how we can work more closely to deliver its objectives. I have had meetings with Dr Nerys Llewelyn Jones, the Interim Environmental Protection Assessor for Wales (IEPAW) and Natalie Prosser, the Head of the Office for Environmental Protection in England. I have also had introductory meetings with Lawrence Slade, the new CEO of the Energy Networks Association, and Dr Richard Irvine, the new Chief Veterinary Officer.
5. Just after the last Board meeting I spent a very useful day with Ian Dunn, the Chief Executive of Plantlife UK. We visited Kenfig National Nature Reserve (NNR) together, and were joined by members of his and our teams, including Dr Rosie Plummer, who is part of both! I think we will see more joint working in future, particularly around grassland restoration.
6. In the middle of June, I enjoyed a trip to Stirling for the Plenary Meeting of European Nature Conservation Agencies (ENCA), hosted by NatureScot. The theme of the meeting was land use and land use change in addressing the nature and climate crisis. The weekend included a site visit to Flanders Moss and the RSPB reserve at Gartocharn on Loch Lomond to see landscape and habitat restoration work that aims to halt loss of biodiversity at the site by 2030. Nick Bialynicki-Birula from our Natural Resource Management (NRM) team led a session on Transformative Change, and it was great to see Wales leading the discussions with other nations. June was a busy time for the UK Nature Conservation Bodies, with a meeting in Northern Ireland, which Ruth Jenkins attended on my behalf, followed by a Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) meeting, which Prof Steve Ormerod attended. This was Colin Galbraith's final meeting as JNCC Chair, as he moves to take on the Chair role at NatureScot.

Senior staffing

7. Christian Wilcox has now joined NRW as Head of Strategic Projects. Recruitment continues for the Head of Operations for South West Wales and for the Head of Governance roles.

Strategic Issues

Natur am Byth Partnership Funding Success

8. The National Lottery Heritage Fund has awarded the Natur am Byth partnership £4.1 million to save Wales' most threatened species and support community action for nature. This follows two years of detailed planning by NRW and our nine Environmental Non-Governmental Organisation (eNGO) partners. The £8 million four-year delivery phase will commence this summer and consists of eleven projects focusing on 67 threatened species, plus a number of Wales-wide initiatives to widen participation and public connection with nature.
9. Not only will this be one of the most ambitious conservation programmes ever undertaken in Wales, it will also offer a host of engagement and volunteer activities to bring each species to life, reconnect people to nature and build on the value that Welsh culture and language place on the natural world. Each Place-based project will tackle the root causes of species decline, working with hundreds of landowners and community volunteers to deliver positive change for nature recovery – directly in support of our new corporate vision of people and nature thriving together.
10. Natur am Byth is co-ordinated by NRW in partnership with Amphibian & Reptile Conservation; Bat Conservation Trust; Buglife; Bumblebee Conservation Trust; Butterfly Conservation; Plantlife; Marine Conservation Society; RSPB; and Vincent Wildlife Trust.
11. Over twenty new staff will work across the partnership, employed by one of the ten partners to form an exciting collaboration for nature. NRW employs the Natur am Byth central team who lead on programme management and remain responsible for coordinating delivery across Wales, including communications, people engagement, programme reporting, evaluation and financial compliance. This team exists within the new NRW Operations Strategic Projects group.
12. NRW has contributed £1.7 million towards the programme and the Natur am Byth partners have secured a further £1.4 million from WG, Arts Council of Wales and a number of charitable trusts, foundations and corporate donors. These donations include support from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and significant support from WG's Landfill Disposals Tax Communities Scheme administered by Wales Council for Voluntary Action.

Gamebird Release Licensing Consultation

13. The twelve-week consultation on our proposed approach to regulating the release of gamebirds in Wales closed at midnight on 20 June. The consultation attracted over 42,000 responses, which will now be analysed and considered.
14. Our consultation also served as a statutory opportunity for those affected by the proposal to add common pheasant and red-legged partridge to Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to make representations. We will focus initially on providing the responses from that part of our consultation to WG and the Minister for Climate Change, along with our advice on whether the recommendation should be reconsidered in light of the response.
15. Once the Minister has considered our report and made a decision on whether to add common pheasant and red-legged partridge to the Schedule, we will consider how the responses to the rest of the consultation affect implementation of any required licensing response. If a licensing scheme is required, we aim to have any necessary approach ready for approval by the NRW Board in September, with a view to it coming into force in time for releases in 2024.

Natur a Ni / Nature and Us

16. The advanced draft of the citizens' assembly findings report has been received. This provides a vision statement for what 2050 looks like when nature and society thrive together and draws together the voices and evidence captured throughout the national conversation. NRW is considering the report and the vision statement, and will be developing a formal response in the autumn.
17. In the meantime, we are making plans to release the final vision statement at the end of July. We will host an event at the Royal Welsh Show in July and attend the Go Wild event in Parc Bryn Bach. As part of those events, we will call on other organisations to consider the vision – developed by people in Wales – and ask, “What can you do to help deliver the vision for Nature and Us”? Responses from other organisations will be captured, shared and built into our forward work plans.
18. The vision, findings report, and all supporting materials will be available on the Wales Biodiversity Partnership website.

Environment (Air Quality and Soundscapes) (Wales) Bill

19. The Environment (Air Quality and Soundscapes) (Wales) Bill introduced in March this year aims to align noise, soundscape and air quality policy in Wales to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. As the environmental regulator in Wales, NRW will be required to contribute to the development of new air quality targets and develop policy and guidance for

permitting which meets the new legislative requirements. We will also be expected to develop new guidelines and approaches to integrate the consideration of soundscapes into environmental permitting and regulation of industrial and commercial operations. Soundscapes is a relatively new field of acoustics; additional resources and expertise may be required for NRW to successfully implement soundscapes and meet our obligations under the new legislation.

Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill

20. Over recent months, NRW's Strategic Environmental Policy team have been assessing the potential impact of the Retained EU Law (REUL) Bill on the regime of permits, licenses, consents, registrations, authorisations and exemptions issued by NRW.
21. The first report from the Interim Environmental Protection Assessor for Wales (IEPAW), published in February, reiterated the concerns of the Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution and those of NRW regarding the impact the Bill could have on the functioning of environmental law in Wales. Those concerns included the lack of planning, tight timetable and risk of perverse policy outcomes.
22. In May, the Minister for Climate Change issued a written statement confirming that the IEPAW report had been laid before the Senedd, and publishing her response to the report and the recommendations made therein.
23. At the same time, the UK Government announced amendments to the Bill which included the revocation of the sunset clause due to risks of legal uncertainty, and the inclusion of a new clause to ensure enhanced parliamentary scrutiny for secondary legislation, to reduce the risk of unintended consequences. Additionally, a new clause was added requiring any replacement legislation relating to environmental protection or food standards to at least maintain the same standard of protection as the retained EU law measures. This clause would apply to the whole of the UK and responds to concerns that environmental protection might be weakened as a result of the Bill.
24. We continue to work with WG, particularly in relation to the new revocation schedule listing a smaller selection of laws that will be revoked automatically at the end of 2023. Much of this is considered to be defunct and unnecessary, and we have previously agreed with WG that it can be revoked with minimal impact.
25. An ongoing concern relates to the interpretation of retained EU law. While the Bill provides discretion to depart from established case law (with the removal of the supremacy of EU case law and legal principles), no assessment has been

undertaken to understand the implications of this approach, including the potential for legal challenges, delays and financial repercussions. This is a particular concern with the Habitats Regulations due to the volume of case law that has built up and the amount of guidance, best practice and decisions now based on case law, rather than the Regulations themselves.

Operational Issues

Wildfires on the Land in our Care

26. In recent months, there has been a significant number of wildfires on NRW managed land, and this has generated public and media interest. Since early March, there have been 36 wildfires, with the Rhigos and Blaengarw fires of significant size and intensity, each lasting at least seven days.
27. In such events, we support the Fire & Rescue Services (FRS) by providing local knowledge and access, and the use of helicopters and heavy machinery. Wildfire incidents require significant staff time from both NRW and FRS and often pose a 'life and limb' risk. They can cause significant damage to property, biodiversity, loss of carbon, impact air quality and increase risk of later landslips. Most wildfires on the land in our care are the result of deliberate ignition and occur mainly in the South Wales Valleys in close proximity to populated areas.
28. We will be assigning a Recovery Manager to coordinate how we deal with the overall impact of wildfires across the land in our care. We have already upgraded our incident response capability, the result of which can be seen in the efficiency of our incident response this year. Longer-term we are adapting the land in our care to cope with increased risk of wildfire due to climate change.
29. One of our largest wildfires this year occurred on the Welsh Government Woodland Estate (WGWE) at Rhigos Mountain, South Wales. The fire burned approximately 120 hectares of woodland and an adjacent 20 hectares of land, including much of the designated area of the Craig y Llyn Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), part of which we manage in conjunction with the South and West Wales Wildlife Trust. Fire breaks were installed to help try to manage and control the fire and only small areas are now still smouldering. Monitoring continues and Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water are undertaking water quality sampling at Llyn Fawr, an important water resource asset. Extensive damage was caused to sections of the Skyline mountain bike trail and although Zip Word Tower had to cease operations at the peak of the fire, their infrastructure was saved.

30. The Healthy Hillides Wildfire Demonstration project has drawn to a close the evidence-building phase funded through the Rural Development Fund, via Welsh Government.
31. The project, hosted by NRW in partnership with the South Wales Fire & Rescue Service, Wildlife Trust of South & West Wales and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, has been exploring an integrated approach to wildfire management. This has included education and awareness, prevention and incident response, taking an integrated landscape approach to wildfire throughout the year not just in wildfire events.
32. With £850,000 in funding over the past two years, Healthy Hillides has benefitted from dedicated resources, including the secondment of a fire officer for six months. Using demonstration sites, trial approaches and stakeholder engagement locally and internationally, the project has explored the resilience of Wales in terms of incident response, land management and policy and the need to adapt to climate change predictions that wildfire will become a greater risk. The evidence gathered will inform a series of recommendations to build wildfire resilience into the landscape, while also improving ecological resilience, communities, rural economies and fire fighter safety.
33. A Wildfire in Wales Conference was held on 13 and 14 June, where a diverse range of attendees discussed the challenges and next steps around wildfire policy and management. This was a successful event with lots of positive feedback and useful partnerships and networks maintained and forged. The open discussions revealed a clear consensus that this is a challenge for society as a whole and we all have a part to play in reducing the risk of wildfire, building it into how we manage the land throughout the year.
34. The next steps look at how we can embed the learning within NRW. There are challenges for us in incident management and prevention measures to be incorporated into our own land management. We also have a role in highlighting the environmental risks of wildfire and the impact on air quality, health and wellbeing.
35. In South Central Wales, due to the significant risks in the region, we are developing a wildfire strategy to be embedded in our local-approach woodland plans.

Q4 Enforcement update

36. Incident attendance and enforcement is an important part of our regulatory toolkit, helping to ensure we respond in a proportionate way to pollution incidents. Unlike our planned regulatory activities, which help to prevent pollution through compliance

assessment, best practice, campaigns and advice, enforcement is reactive, taking place once harm has occurred. Where things go wrong through negligence, deliberate actions or accidents we seek proportionate justice for the offences that caused the pollution, applying a range of enforcement options. Our Annual Regulation Reports show how our enforcement actions contribute to the wellbeing objectives in Wales.

37. Between January and March this year, we opened 148 new enforcement cases, of which 42% were generated as a result of NRW attendance at incidents. 6% were from fisheries' Rod & Line cases while 52% were generated from regulatory non-compliance at permitted sites. We completed enforcement actions and closed 35 of the cases within the same time period.
38. During the same period, we concluded 22 existing prosecution cases from 2022 or earlier. These included fourteen fisheries, four water and four waste cases. One of the waste prosecutions was for an unlawful deposit of waste on land in 2018; the defendant was convicted at Swansea Crown Court in October 2019 with his sentencing deferred. Due to Covid, the case finally concluded in March 2023, when the defendant was ordered to pay £3,770.51 in compensation under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 to reimburse the landowner the cost of removing the unlawful deposit of waste.

Dee Conservancy Harbour Revision Order 2023

39. Another long-running saga came to a conclusion on 21 June when the Department for Transport (DfT) signed the Dee Conservancy Harbour Revision Order 2023. The Order, which modernises NRW's powers as the Statutory Harbour and Local Lighthouse Authority in respect of navigation in the Dee estuary, will come into force on 12 July. The new Order establishes a Consultative Committee, with whom NRW must consult on matters affecting the conservancy, as well as powers allowing for the collection of charges for services provided by NRW as the Statutory Dee Conservancy Harbour Authority (for example, harbour works permits, conservancy use charges).

Filming on NRW land in North West Wales

40. Filming for scenes of a major TV production on NRW land has just finished. The set up and filming lasted for three weeks on our land at Newborough and Ynys Llanddwyn on Anglesey. "Red Gun" was the code name for production of a new series of one of the largest international TV series franchises ever made.
41. The sites used are internationally important conservation sites with extensive site and species designations. The site also attracts over 500,000 visitors per year and

is very sensitive with local communities due to access issues and traffic problems. We have worked closely with the production company for over a year to ensure the filming could proceed without impacting on the protected sites, adversely affecting the local community, or disrupting the popular visitor experience. This was achieved by early engagement and considerable hard work from colleagues to ensure appropriate scheduling to avoid peak visitor and breeding times, communications with the community, and timely consenting and permitting.

42. The production has generated significant local economic benefits and received positive local and media reaction. The project therefore had huge potential reputational impact for NRW and for Wales. The hard work and positive approach of our staff and the production company ensured that the production went ahead with no adverse impacts on nature, the community or visitors, and avoided the adverse media and political impacts that we have seen with some other major productions.

Teifi Catchment project

43. Further to discussions between our Chair and the Minister for Climate Change, we have continued to develop a proposal for a catchment approach on the Teifi. Discussions regarding funding are under way with WG, with the intention of recruiting to two new posts initially and further posts to follow. The intention is to focus on a catchment-wide scale, working in partnership with others, to develop innovative approaches to water quality improvement in the Teifi catchment, a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) catchment that is currently failing to meet its phosphate standards.

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) Rivers Project Update

44. We continue to work on the NRW actions in the First Minister's Action Plan, Relieving Pressures on SAC River Catchments to Support Delivery of Affordable Housing. These have been reflected in our corporate targets for the project. WG have published the new governance structure for the First Minister's Action Plan with our Chair playing a pivotal role in the Ministerial Oversight Group.
45. Since the last update, we have completed the independent quality assurance of the Source Apportionment (SAGIS) models for all of the SAC rivers and conclude that they are fit for purpose for wastewater planning. The SAGIS report for the Tywi has been published by Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water. The other passing SAC river reports will be published soon. Our "Lines to Take" document has been updated and published on the intranet so all staff have a consistent resource to refer to before attending meetings and interacting with the public.

46. Across the border, Natural England have published an updated assessment changing the status of units on the Lugg and Wye to “unfavourable declining”. This was covered by the media and NRW was approached for comment on the Welsh side of the Wye. Political interest is also increasing significantly, and Therese Coffey MP recently held a Round Table event with a range of different officers and stakeholders invited, including NRW. A follow-up event is being planned with Radnor Wildlife Trust leading.
47. WG have appointed ARUP Consultants (working with Ricardo) to produce the nutrient calculators for the SAC rivers and this work is now progressing. NRW attends the steering group. The contract covers the nine SAC rivers plus Llyn Tegid for phosphorus and nitrogen. Draft calculators are due for end of August with training in the autumn (an ambitious timescale).
48. As the Review of Permits approaches (the time when revised permits will start to be released), we have been focusing on how this information should be released and developing training for colleagues and external partners. Given the high number of planning applications currently on hold awaiting the outcome of the Review, we need to ensure that permit information is released in a controlled way and that NRW and planning authority staff know how to interpret the outcomes and apply them consistently in planning responses. This should help us to manage the expected peak in workload in an efficient and effective way.
49. We are working to provide Review of Permit outcomes on our website so that developers and planning authorities will have easy access to the permit information they require.
50. There are a number of consultations for poultry unit planning applications in the queue, where export of manures is the preferred solution to disposal of manures. Development Planning Advice Service staff are responding to these where our position is of concern and relates to the fate of the manures and where they are subsequently applied.
51. The list of Mitigation Measures was circulated for internal consultation in April and the comments have been reviewed and implemented. A user-friendly version of the spreadsheet has been drafted for sharing externally. A paper has been written to be sent to the Sustainable Land and Water Sub Group for approval before circulating to WG by the end of June, to meet the deadline in the First Minister’s Action Plan.

Reservoir Works Shortlisted for Awards

52. NRW's Llyn Tegid Reservoir Safety Project in Bala and the Prince Llewelyn Reservoir Safety Project have been shortlisted in the 2023 Institute of Civil Engineers (ICE) Wales Cymru Civil Engineering Awards.
53. Work at Llyn Tegid took place to enable it to withstand extreme weather events and provide protection to more than eight hundred local properties. The project was funded by Welsh Government and delivered by William Hughes Civil Engineering, Binnies, Arcadis, Ground Control and Dams and Reservoirs Ltd. The work, completed in March 2023, and involved strengthening the lake's embankments with more than 13,000 tonnes of rock protection and included environmental and recreational enhancements such as improved footpaths and new seating areas, as well as five hectares of restored natural habitats and new areas of wildflower meadows.
54. Prince Llewelyn is a historic dam structure located within NRW's forestry estate outside Dolwyddelan. The dam was built in the 1800s to provide water to the Prince Llewelyn quarry downstream. As the reservoir no longer provided a function and was unsuitable for use as a water supply, NRW took the decision to safely decommission the dam structure, returning the waterbody to natural levels and reducing the risk of flooding to properties downstream. Biodiversity enhancements were also incorporated to provide benefits for wildlife while the work ensured a significant piece of Wales' industrial archaeology is safely retained for future generations. The work was carried out by William Hughes Civil Engineering.
55. The Awards ceremony takes place in September.

Commercial

Timber

56. The new version of the Timber Sales Governance Standard has been successfully implemented for the July Sale (to close on 3 July). The new standard will give NRW more control over deciding who has won lots and removes the dependence on highest bidder principle, allowing for discussion and decisions based on other factors such as health and safety record, forward sold volume, contract extension issues and credit management. This change has been well circulated and we have met with several customers to explain the change, as well as provided extensive training on the new standards internally.

Y Bryn Windfarm

57. Y Bryn has gone into formal Pre-Application Consultation. This is the first formal, publicly-advertised stage in the planning process and is generating quite a bit of

public interest, some good and some not so good. We are monitoring the situation but it is important NRW does not influence the planning process in any way beyond our usual role as a responder.

Internal

Adfywio

58. The Cardiff Opportunity project to move staff from Tŷ Cambria and Rivers House to the WG offices at Cathays Park, is moving at pace. We are close to agreeing head of terms with WG. Good progress in being made to clear Tŷ Cambria and move us into Cathays Park in late 2023 or early 2024.
59. We have now initiated a project to develop a business case and options for our office at Llandarcy. We have a lease break opportunity in November 2023 which would see us leave in November 2024.
60. The 10-year Accommodation Strategy and associated Dynamic Delivery Plan has been endorsed by the Executive Team and is due to for publication and staff engagement from July onwards.
61. The Electric Vehicle (EV) salary sacrifice scheme is ready to initiate pending union discussion over the different pension outcomes.
62. Adfywio has introduced Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) for use in our plant and some operational vehicles. This is an interim fuel which offers a 90% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.
63. The design of NRW-wide integrated Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) continues with surveys being conducted. This work will be completed in late summer, enabling us to procure the build and operation in early 2024. As an interim measure we have ordered around fifty EV chargers, to be installed within the next quarter to support the EVs we have and are ordering in this financial year.
64. We have developed an Interim Fleet Purchasing Policy to support the transition to an ultra-low emission (ULEV) fleet. This means that NRW will only buy or lease diesel or petrol cars and vans by exception. All ULEV purchases will be battery electric.

Corporate Plan Gatherings

65. Through June and early July, a total of 1,033 colleagues attended seven Gatherings across Wales. These local events replace the #TeamNRW annual event and have

been designed in response to feedback from staff on their desire to come together to build connections across teams and directorates.

66. Led by ET, the sessions use the Corporate Plan and Ein Llais as a springboard for new conversations between colleagues. The sessions have included four pop-ups – Ein Llais, Adfywio, Values and Nature and Us – seeking staff feedback and providing an update on next steps. The format of the session has been adjusted for each venue.

67. An evaluation is planned over the summer to inform further events in the autumn.

Communications & Customer

Communications

68. The Communications Team continue to support the roll out of the new Corporate Plan, working with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Team to launch the Plan at the Senedd event. This included sourcing the endorsement from stakeholders as part of the communications, which we centred around World Environment Day. The team continues to provide support to the Corporate Plan gatherings being held in June and July.

69. The Communications Team has also been involved in communications about the impact on the environment of the dry and hot weather, including drought planning with the Drought Liaison Group, incident support on wildfires, and other environmental impacts such as fish distress and blue-green algae. Media interviews have included Sky News and BBC Cymru Wales.

70. We worked closely with the National Heritage Lottery Fund and other match funders to communicate the success of securing £8 million for the Natur am Byth project. The communications benefitted from good photography and we will continue to promote the project as we recruit to the twenty posts on offer.

71. Our enforcement and prosecution work continued to attract media coverage, most notably the prosecution of Taylor Wimpey for pollution offences. We also worked with the Strategic Review of Charging (SROC) Team to communicate the outcome of the assurance work undertaken by WG on our charging scheme proposals to stakeholders and media.

72. Other media interest issues we've worked on this period include: our response to a Countryfile programme on Tŷ Llwyd and historic land contamination; key briefings and interviews on climate change and flood risk as part of our contribution to a

Wales this Week programme focussed on impacts of coastal sea level rise; and our partnership work with the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science and Bangor University to record the impact of noise on marine mammals, which attracted a wide range of media interest. Enquiries related to water quality (particularly Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs), phosphates and the start of bathing water sampling season), the gamebird consultation and queries related to seasonal algal blooms were also frequent.

73. We supported communications around the launch of the consultation on the Abermule bulking facility and the consultation on plans to manage Newborough NNR and Forest.

Royal Welsh Show and National Eisteddfod

74. Plans are progressing for both events. Our theme is Nature's Recovery and we will showcase three projects: the peatland restoration project in Gwynedd, the Gower water voles and the horse mussels project off the coast of Pen Llŷn.

Refreshed Complaints policy implementation

75. On 1 April, we launched our refreshed Complaints and Commendations Policy, which will make it easier and quicker for customers to provide feedback on a service they have received from us. The policy reduces the number of complaint stages from three to two, and Stage 1 complaints will be responded to within ten rather than twenty working days. We have also introduced a simplified Stage 2 process, which is no less robust than the current process but means we can respond to the majority of Stage 2 investigations within twenty working days. We have received positive feedback from staff regarding the new Stage 2 process.

76. A key focus of the new policy is to use the feedback from complaints to improve processes and procedures, therefore avoiding repeat complaints and improve the customer experience. This demonstrates our commitment to continually improving the way we handle customer complaints, to ensure they are investigated thoroughly and quickly, which has benefits for customers and colleagues alike.

77. At the end of the first quarter we will be publishing complaint performance information via the Public Service Ombudsman of Wales website. This will allow the Ombudsman and customers to compare our performance with other public sector organisations in Wales, and ensure we are complying with the Ombudsman's complaint handling policy.

Forward Look

Wednesday 16 August – Board Update Call

Thursday 7 September – Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

Monday 11 September – Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (Annual Reports & Accounts)

Wednesday 13 September – People and Customer Committee

Thursday 14 September – Finance Committee

Wednesday 20 and Thursday 21 September – Board Meeting

NRW Board Paper

Date of Meeting:	19 th July 2023
Title:	Audit & Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) Update
Reference:	23-07-B02
Update reviewed by:	Kath Palmer - ARAC Chair
Update presented by:	Kath Palmer - ARAC Chair
Purpose of paper:	Information
Recommendation:	To note the update

Background

1. This update for the Board is in respect of 5 June 2023 Audit and Risk Assurance (ARAC) meeting.

Update

Closed Session

2. ARAC members held their annual closed session with the Accounting Officer.

Audit Wales

3. Audit Wales had provided a written update which noted that the audit of the final accounts was scheduled for June/July 2023 and included links to recent Audit Wales publications. The Audit Wales Plan 2023 had also been presented to ARAC.

Annual Accounts and Finance Update

4. ARAC had reviewed the Annual Accounts in a thorough deep dive session, and had since been submitted to Audit Wales. The Accounts was planned to be signed off in September.
5. A finance update was provided which included the full year report of the Losses, Special Payments and Single Tender Actions. ARAC also reviewed and approved the Counter Fraud Delivery Plan 2023-24.

Draft Annual Report 2022-23

6. ARAC reviewed and provided scrutiny on the draft Annual Report 2022-23. This would be signed off with the Accounts, planned for September.

Internal Audit

7. Five internal audit reports were received and noted. Three with substantial assurance, two moderate and one limited. It was noted it was great progress to receive three with substantial assurance. The actions and timelines on the limited audit would return to the next ARAC as speedier timelines had been asked for. ARAC were presented with and endorsed the proposed revised Internal Audit Charter. The positive External Quality Assurance Report was also noted and the Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24.
8. The Head of Internal Audit presented the draft Internal Audit Annual Opinion, which was a moderate opinion, with a caveat that improvements needed to continue. ARAC welcomed the opinion and discussion took place around aspirations for the future.
9. ARAC approved the Annual Whistleblowing Report 2022-23.

Annual Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) Assurance Report

10. ARAC welcomed the Report and noted that it was more accessible. A large amount of work had been undertaken during the course of the year and ARAC thanked all those involved. The Report was endorsed.

Corporate Governance Update

11. Highlights from the update included the new Planning and Resources Group, changes to ways of working and that the Governance team's capacity would be increased. Work to develop assurance across the organisation was also noted.

Risk Management

12. Work on revising the Strategic Risk Register to align with the new Corporate Plan had begun, and would be presented to ARAC in September.

Closed Session

13. ARAC members held a closed session with the Head of Internal Audit.

NRW Board Paper

Date of meeting:	19 th July 2023
Title of Paper:	Finance Committee Board Update
Paper Reference:	23-07-B03
Paper sponsored by:	Helen Pittaway, Finance Committee Chair
Paper prepared by:	Board Secretariat
Paper presented by:	Helen Pittaway, Finance Committee Chair
Purpose of the paper	Information
Summary	To provide an update to the Finance Committee (FC) – 19 th June

Background

1. This paper provides an update to the Board following the Finance Committee (FC) meeting on 19th June 2023. The minutes from these meetings can be made available to any Board member interested.

Update

2023-24 Confirmed Opening Budget

2. The confirmed 2023-24 opening budget was presented to FC. It was noted that NRW would monitor in-year performance against the confirmed opening budget. FC had a substantial discussion on timber income and agreed to have a strategic session on timber in the future. FC endorsed the 2023-24 opening budget

Finance Performance Update

3. FC were provided with an overview of the budget performance for Period 2 (May). Key messages were highlighted including that the budget would be very tight for 2023-24.

NRW Board Approvals for endorsement by Finance Committee

4. FC endorsed three approvals for Board.

Business Planning update

5. The 2023-24 Business Plan, and the interim measures and metrics were discussed. An overview to the approach taken to develop the new Corporate Plan measures and metrics was provided including the importance of taking the time to make sure they were robust.
6. FC endorsed the Business Plan and the interim measures and metrics for the 2023-24 dashboard.

Annual Report & Accounts

7. The Finance Committee were asked to review the Performance Report and the Analytical Review. FC were asked to comment on the tone and examples of activities undertaken by NRW. Some suggestions regarding the tone of the report were proposed. Generally, FC welcomed the content of the Report.

Commercial Activities

8. Recent updates to the Commercial Strategy were highlighted. Current commercial activity and proposed additional activity for 2023-24 were also presented.
9. FC had a lengthy discussion on the role of commercial within NRW including the value of the Commercial team, and how commercial activity could support the Corporate Plan Objectives.

Business Transformation update

10. An update was provided on the Business Transformation Programme including progress since the last FC meeting, the four areas of focus identified under the reset, and the focus of work for the next quarter.

Risk Management

11. FC were provided with a verbal update to Strategic Risk 04 – Setting Strategic Direction. It was the first strategic risk to reach its target score. FC discussed evolving the risk to encompass delivery of the Corporate Plan.

NRW Board Paper

Date of meeting:	19 th July 2023
Title of Paper:	People and Customer Committee Board Update
Paper Reference:	23-07-B05
Paper sponsored by:	Mark McKenna, People and Customer Committee Chair
Paper prepared by:	Board Secretariat
Paper presented by:	Mark McKenna, People and Customer Committee Chair
Purpose of the paper	Information
Summary	To provide an update to the People and Customer Committee) – 7 th June

Background

1. This paper provides an update to the Board following the People and Customer Committee (PCC) meeting on 7th June 2023. The minutes from these meetings can be made available to any Board member interested.

Update

Ways of working

2. PCC discussed the opportunity to steer the Committee's agenda in a more strategic direction. The Committee's role in supporting the delivery of the new Corporate Plan and developing a culture of innovation, creativity, and problem-solving was considered.

Ein Llais Survey High Level Reporting

3. The results of the Ein Llais staff survey were presented and discussed. The consistency in responses was noted. The next steps to deliver against the three main areas of focus were considered. PCC were updated on the planned approach to the next staff surveys. It was noted that the results were most valuable when taken in the context of the Corporate Plan, recognising the strategic aspects, and supporting staff empowerment.

Customer and Digital Transformation Programme

4. The Committee were updated on the strategic areas relating to the Digital Strategy and the Customer and Stakeholder Strategy. The Programme would be an iterative process to ensure that the strategies aligned with the Corporate Plan as the work progressed. PCC agreed to review the approach to update reports provided to the Committee.

Annual Perceptions Audit findings

5. The Annual Perceptions Audit Report findings were presented. This provided a benchmark for measurement of NRW's public affairs; future Reports would tie into NRW's advocacy work. PCC challenged whether more detailed analysis could be provided in future subject to budgetary constraints and recommended that the demographic should be widened.

People Transformation Highlight Report

6. A presentation was provided on the People Transformation Programme. PCC challenged whether the scope of the Programme was sufficiently transformational. It was explained that the targets laid out in the Programme would enable NRW to take a more strategic view of People policy going forward. The role of behavioural insights was discussed.

Strategic Workforce Planning

7. PCC discussed the issues around Strategic Workforce Planning. Resourcing had been identified as a strategic risk for NRW. The role of the Planning and Resources Group (PRG) was described. Partnership working with universities was highlighted and the Committee were updated on a model that was being trialled with the Flood Risk Management and Finance teams.

Welsh Language Annual Report

8. Committee members discussed the content of the Welsh Language Annual Report and considered the areas for strategic development. It was recognised that the Report focused on compliance, but Committee members noted that there were also links made from the significance of the Welsh language to the broader work of NRW and the environment. The Committee agreed that a full conversation on developing the strategic direction of the use of the Welsh language in NRW would be needed and it was agreed that this should be added to the agenda for the meeting in September.
9. PCC endorsed the Welsh Language Annual Report for 2022/23.

Communications Quarterly Report

10. The Committee received the Communications Quarterly Report. It was reported that the majority of media and social media communications contained positive to neutral coverage. Committee members recommended that the engagement rates on Welsh

and English language and a short qualitative dialogue on trends from previous reports should be provided in the next Communications Quarterly Report.

Forward Look

11. The Committee reflected on the approach to future meetings considering the discussions around moving towards a more strategic agenda. It was agreed that the PCC Chair, Executive Director of Corporate Strategy and Development, and Executive Director of Communications, Customer and Commercial, should meet to discuss the revised approach to PCC.

Additional Items

12. PCC considered and noted the following items:

- The Pay Policy Statement – 31st March 2023
- The Management Information for Quarter 4 – January to March 2023
- The Annual Remuneration Report 2022/23

NRW Board Paper

Date of meeting:	19 th July 2023
Title of Paper:	Protected Areas Committee Board Update
Paper Reference:	23-07-B06
Paper sponsored by:	Dr Rosie Plummer, Protected Areas Committee Chair
Paper prepared by:	Board Secretariat
Paper presented by:	Dr Rosie Plummer, Protected Areas Committee Chair
Purpose of the paper	Information
Summary	To provide an update to the Protected Areas Committee meeting, 23 rd June 2023 and the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Notification meeting, 29 th June 2023

Background

1. This paper provides an update to the Board following the Protected Areas Committee (PrAC) meeting on 23rd June 2023, and the PrAC Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Notification meeting on 29th June 2023.

Update – General Meeting, 23rd June 2023

Planning Policy Wales Update

2. The key changes in Welsh Government's Planning Policy Wales consultation were presented, discussed and noted. Support was given to NRW's response and the challenges of implementing the policy, which would largely rely on planning authorities, were recognised.

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) Rivers Project

3. PrAC discussed the ongoing SAC Rivers Project noting the implications of the First Minister's Action Plan. It was recognised that a greater level of data was required to prioritise resources effectively. Ways of improving stakeholder engagement, particularly in the agricultural sector were also being explored.

Evidence and Monitoring for the Global Biodiversity Framework Target 3 (30 by 30) in a Welsh Context

4. The current level of NRW's evidence base and ways of improving data collection were considered and discussed. A need for better integration of evidence was identified, and the benefits and risks of using emergent techniques were discussed. PrAC noted the importance of engaging external stakeholders and the general public in achieving NRW's objectives. It was recognised that NRW had a role in being a bold advocate in accordance with the new Corporate Plan.

Update on Biodiversity Deep Dive

5. An overview of the Biodiversity Deep Dive recommendations and ongoing activity was provided. The need to increase the number of SSSI designations was discussed, and the legislative basis for expanding designations into areas where nature conservation was not an inherent requirement, for example National Parks where the designation is landscape focussed, were considered. The value of Biodiversity Reports as a requirement for entry into schemes such as the Sustainable Farming Scheme was discussed.

Risk Management – Strategic Risk 05 (SR05) (Championing SMNR)

6. PrAC examined the effectiveness of the controls described in SR05, particularly in relation to Area Statements. This Risk is due to be updated in accordance with the new Corporate Plan, which will bring significant changes in the next iteration. It was highlighted that an overview of the current elements should be maintained to ensure nothing was lost and risks were not duplicated at different levels in the organisation. NRW's role in supporting Welsh Government to finalise the National Resources Policy was discussed.

Written Updates

7. PrAC considered and noted the warning letter NRW received from itself as enforcer, emphasising the importance of it performing to the same high standards expected of others. It sought and received assurance that there would be a lessons learnt process to ensure the issue was not repeated.
8. The current status of sites within the SSSI notification process were considered and noted.

Protected Areas Committee Governance

9. The Forward Look was reviewed and agreed. Arrangements and points of process and conduct for the public SSSI Notification meeting for the Cae Glas site were discussed and confirmed.

AOB

10. PrAC noted that the recent wildfire reports have remarked on damage to some SSSIs. A Recovery Officer was to be appointed shortly to assess the effects and develop a recovery plan. A report would be made to PrAC.

Update – SSSI Notification meeting for Cae Glas, Wern, 29th June 2023

Meeting Arrangements

11. The meeting in public to consider whether or not the notification to of Cae Glas, Wern should be upheld or withdrawn, in the light of the unresolved objection, was held in public in Welshpool. PrAC was well prepared through prior legal training by Sophie Hoffman, Browne Jacobson, external legal adviser, who was also in attendance for the meeting.
12. PrAC acts on delegated authority of the Board for this purpose.
13. The process documentation and guidance has recently been significantly updated and revised to fully reflect NRW's operating arrangements.
14. In line with revised governance arrangements agreed recently by the Board, Dr Pete Fox afforded PrAC to ensure any risk to quoracy was sufficiently mitigated. Lesley Jones took part having replaced Mark McKenna as PrAC member on 14th June 2023.

Site Information and Officer's Report, including formal recommendation

15. PrAC received and noted the Officer's Report. A formal recommendation was made that the site at Cae Glas, Wern be designated as a SSSI. In discussion PrAC subjected the officer's report and recommendation to scrutiny, reviewing aspects including the site boundaries and the evidence of special interest provided.
16. The site visit report by PrAC member Geraint Davies was received and accepted.

Objections and Other Representations

17. Neither the Objector, nor their representative on whose behalf attendance had been accepted and notified, were present. PrAC considered the objections in their absence.

Committee Discussion and Decision

18. PrAC satisfied itself that the information provided had sufficient scrutiny and unanimously agreed to confirm the SSSI designation without modification.
19. The list of Operations Likely to Damage the Special Interest (OLDSI) was reviewed and endorsed.

Next Steps

20. The site would be confirmed as an SSSI and would be notified in writing. Attempts to engage with the stakeholders would continue.

NRW Board Paper

Date of meeting:	19 th July 2023
Title of Paper:	Wales Land Management Forum (WLMF) Update
Paper Reference:	23-07-B07
Paper sponsored by:	Professor Rhys Jones, WLMF Chair
Paper prepared by:	Bronwen Martin, Specialist Advisor: Wales Land Management
Paper presented by:	Professor Rhys Jones, WLMF Chair
Purpose of the paper	Information
Summary	Summarise what considerations, decisions, and actions you are seeking from the committee.

Wales Land Management Forum (WLMF)

1. The Wales Land Management Forum (WLMF) meetings take place four times per year, and they provide an opportunity for Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and other WLMF membership organisations to share information, identify common interests and work together in a collaborative way on strategic land management issues.

[Natural Resources Wales - Wales Land Management Forum \(WLMF\)](#)

Update

5th June 2023 meeting

2. The most recent WLMF meeting was held on 5th June 2023.
3. Tristan Hatton-Ellis, NRW joined the meeting to provide a presentation on the river restoration work undertaken by NRW to boost the pearl mussel population.
4. A discussion from the March meeting prompted a request for information about the coastal adaptation work that NRW have been undertaking. Nicola Rimington and Richard Park, NRW joined the meeting to discuss climate change and coastal management in Wales.

5. All WLMF members had the opportunity to ask about NRW Updates and also share updates from their own organisations.
6. The next WLMF meeting will be held on Monday 18th September 2023.
7. Once the meeting minutes have been reviewed and formally agreed by members, they are published on the WLMF page on the NRW website.

WLMF Sub Group on Agricultural Pollution

8. The primary purpose of the WLMF Sub Group is to identify opportunities to eliminate agricultural pollution in Wales whilst maintaining a thriving farming sector following five key themes (advice & guidance, voluntary approach, regulation, innovation, and investment), and working in collaboration with a range of agricultural and environmental stakeholders.

[Natural Resources Wales - Wales Land Management Forum \(WLMF\) Sub Group on Agricultural Pollution](#)

Update

5th May 2023 meeting

9. The WLMF Sub Group met in person on 5th May at Bwlch Nant Yr Arian Visitors Centre for an informal get together as Zoe Henderson's last meeting as Chairperson. The group thanked Zoe for her commitment and dedication as Chairperson, enjoyed a walk and reminisced about some memories and milestones.

15th May 2023 meeting

10. John Reed, Director of Avara Foods joined the meeting to share some learnings from the work they have recently undertaken. Avara Foods is a large poultry business producing broiler and turkeys mainly across England. Herefordshire has been one of their main operating areas with about 120 farms in their supply chain within that catchment area. John discussed some of the concerns, challenges and issues relating to river pollution which has motivated Avara to conduct their own research.
11. With a change in Chairperson, there is an opportunity to review the ways in which we approach agricultural pollution through the WLMF Sub Group. The members discussed the future direction of the group, shared ideas and planned the provisional forward look.

19th June 2023 meeting

12. One of the WLMF Sub Group members (Sarah Jones, Dŵr Cymru) arranged a site visit to two Beacons Water Group (BWG) farms. This served as a direct follow up to a presentation by Dŵr Cymru in December 2022. The purpose of the visit was to showcase the collaborative approach between Dŵr Cymru and the BWG to safeguard water quality in drinking water catchments. The group heard directly from BWG

members and saw some mitigation actions being trialled in situ. Some of the key topics covered during the visit included:

- Hearing about the Carbon European Innovation Programme (EIP) that the BWG have been involved in
- Seeing the on-farm weather station and app demonstration
- Hydrological flow mapping used on the farm to identify risks and highlighting opportunities
- An introduction to the 'Developing productive buffers' trial in-situ

At the end of the visit, the group explored opportunities for working together to develop some of these approaches and trials further.

13. The next WLMF Sub Group will be held on Monday 10th July 2023.

14. Once the meeting minutes have been reviewed and formally agreed by members, they are published on the WLMF Sub Group page on the NRW website.

NRW Board Paper

Date of meeting:	19 July 2023
Title of Paper:	Finance Performance Report
Paper Reference:	23-07-B09
Paper sponsored by:	Rachael Cunningham, Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Paper prepared by:	Rob Bell, Head of Finance; Mark Collins, Business Finance Manager
Paper presented by:	Rob Bell, Head of Finance
Purpose of the paper:	Approval (final original budget) / Discussion (Financial Performance)
Summary	<p>To approve:</p> <p>The final original budget of £266.3m.</p> <p>To scrutinise:</p> <p>Financial performance to the end of May 2023.</p>

Background

1. There is a separate paper for approvals.

Financial Performance to 31st May 2023

2. The Finance Performance report provides detail on progress across the different types of income, expenditure, and programmes. Annex A summarises the key messages in respect of:
 - Opening original budget changes.
 - Performance to end of May 2023, compared to the original budget.
 - Risks to us being able to spend within our funding levels.
 - Commentary by exception on how we are progressing against the original budget for the different types of expenditure.

Risks and opportunities

3. We hold a risk in the Finance and Corporate Services Risk Register for 'in year spend'. This also links to SR01 (Insufficient Funding – Medium Term). Even with a larger budget than last financial year, the current outlook is challenging with staff costs already ahead of profile.
4. Our central over-programming is currently £3.5m. We are looking at ways to reduce this, but it will be a challenge. We will update the Board on the emerging position on pay.
5. The wider implications are:
 - (a) **Finance:** This report is about the financial performance of NRW. We hold a risk within the Finance and Corporate Services Directorate Risk Register.
 - (b) **Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (WBFGA):** Every component of the budget contributes to one or many of our Wellbeing Objectives.

Next Steps

6. We encourage budget and project managers to notify Finance of any changes to forecast which can be returned centrally.
7. We will continue to undertake our normal Finance processes and review risks within the budget throughout the year. Programmes such as Business Transformation, Flood and Nature and Capital Emergencies are re-forecasted every month.
8. This report is produced every two months for the Board and Executive Team.

Recommendation

9. Board to approve changes to the opening budget, increasing from £257.7m to £266.3m.
10. Board to scrutinise financial performance to the end of May 2023.

Index of Annexes

Annex A – Financial Performance Report



**NRW Board
19 July 2023
Finance Report**

Content



The finance report has been considered by the Executive Team. The Finance Committee have also received the report, but at the time not all the financial performance pages were available.

The Executive Team have also asked for further work to be undertaken on a lease surrender that was presented to finance committee, but is not included within this report.

Approval

1. Final Original Budget

Scrutiny

2. Financial Performance Report

CONFIRMED Opening Budget for 2023-24 is £266.3m



2023-24 EXPENDITURE BUDGET

Directorate	Staff - Trajectory £000	Workforce Recharges £000	Other Staff £000	Non Staff £000	Revenue Projects £000	Capital Projects £000	Total £000
Communications, Customer & Commercial	6,927	-1,008	197	15,634	0	0	21,750
Corporate Strategy & Development	7,375	-174	1,311	1,894	160	0	10,566
Evidence, Policy & Permitting	36,119	-5,965	891	29,295	4,010	5,241	69,591
Finance & Corporate Services	7,298	-386	779	19,409	1,400	10,426	38,926
Operations	64,789	-10,092	2,222	22,972	7,083	38,470	125,444
Total Expenditure Budget	122,508	-17,625	5,401	89,204	12,653	54,137	266,278

2023-24 INCOME BUDGET

Funding Source	Capital £000	Revenue £000	Total £000
Grant in Aid: Non Flood	2,400	59,683	62,083
Grant in Aid: Flood	22,000	24,500	46,500
Grant in Aid: Additional In-year inc. Grants	25,344	18,179	43,523
Commercial: Timber Sales	0	36,132	36,132
Commercial: Energy Delivery Receipts	0	21,147	21,147
Commercial: Other	0	4,082	4,082
Charges	0	44,416	44,416
External Income	0	8,395	8,395
Total Income Budget	49,744	216,534	266,278

- **As agreed with Executive Team and the Board in May:**
 - We have updated the 2023-24 opening budget position to reflect funding changes and the distribution of programme budgets, and
 - These changes were approved by the Chief Executive and the Executive Directors of Finance and Corporate Services prior to issuing the revised Delegation Letter.
- **Revised Delegation Letter issued 30 May 2023.**
- **Revised budget packs issued 8 June 2023.**
- **We will monitor in-year performance against the CONFIRMED opening budget.**

Changes made: Delegation Letter v1 and CONFIRMED Opening Budget



	Delegation Letter v1 April 2023 £m	CONFIRMED Opening Budget May 2023 £m	Change to Opening Budget £m
Income			
Grant in Aid inc. Grants	146.6	152.1	5.5
Charges	44.9	44.4	-0.5
Commercial	57.9	61.4	3.5
Externally funded	8.3	8.4	0.1
Total	257.7	266.3	8.6

Describing the changes	£m	
Grant in Aid: Welsh Government NaCE grant	3.5	Increased from £22.1m to £25.6m. Includes £2m for reservoir capital works.
Grant in Aid: Flood revenue	2.0	Increase in the baseline from £22.5m to £24.5m (with Head of Flood to recommend allocation).
Charge income	-0.5	Reflects the delay in implementing SRoC changes .
Commercial: Timber income	3.0	The forecast has been increased from £33m to £36m based on a strong start to the year (volume). We have not allocated an extra spend budget. The Head of Commercial will re-forecast the position after the July e-Sale; if the market remains strong we will allocate the budget however, if things slow down, we will reduce the income budget with no impact on the expenditure budget (assuming that it doesn't fall below £33m).
Commercial: Wind energy receipts	0.5	Updated to reflect revised forecast - an increase in surrenderable receipts.
Externally funded projects	0.1	Updated to reflect revised forecast.
Var between Board Paper (March) & Del Letter	8.6	

Finance Performance – May 2023



Update will cover:

1. Financial performance as at the end of May.
2. There is no forecast update, as revised opening budgets were only issued at the beginning of June.
3. We can also provide more information on significant budgets within the report - will ask for feedback from Executive Team.

Messages:

1. Even though the budget is £266.3m, an increase from last financial year, all indications are that this year will be tight and the risk that needs to be managed is not overspending, rather than underspending.
2. The Planning and Resources Group has been established which will make recommendations to the Executive Team on re-distribution of resources whilst Executive Team will consider overall performance against budget. Obvious issues at the moment are Water Quality and any potential liabilities regarding IR35 (if they arise in this financial year).
3. The lessons learnt exercises for both Land Stewardship and Flood capital are progressing and expect to report to Executive Team in July as well as Finance and Flood Committees.
4. As part of the budget, we have allowed for central over-programming of £3.5m – which is going to be a challenge.
5. At the end of May, some concerns have been raised around the affordability of staff budgets, where we are ahead of profile.
6. The outlook is looking positive to achieve the timber income budget of £36m and we have not yet allocated £3m of that to pressures.

Financial Performance - Income



INCOME	Actual	Original Budget	Variance	Original Budget	Remaining Budget	Commentary
by Account Type	YTD	YTD	YTD	Full Year	Full Year	
	£m	£m	£m	£m	%	
Charges	2.0	1.9	0.1	43.8	95%	Overall charging schemes are in line with budget. The full year budget reflects the delay in implementation of Strategic Review of Charges.
Commercial	10.5	10.3	0.3	61.4	83%	Timber income budget for the year currently stands at £36.1m, with income invoiced to date at £6.0m. This is a strong start to the year, £3m of this budget is yet to be allocated, until we are confident we can achieve the full £36m target. This will be considered by the Planning and Resources Group in July.
European & external	0.1	0.5	-0.4	8.4	99%	The full year budget is an accurate reflection of the programme, but the profiles of the various projects are being reassessed.
Grant in aid	29.8	27.9	1.9	152.1	80%	Grant in Aid and WG Grants are slightly ahead of profile, but the forecast remains £152.1m.
Use of Reserves	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	100%	
TOTAL: NRW	42.5	40.6	1.9	266.3	84%	

Financial Performance - Expenditure

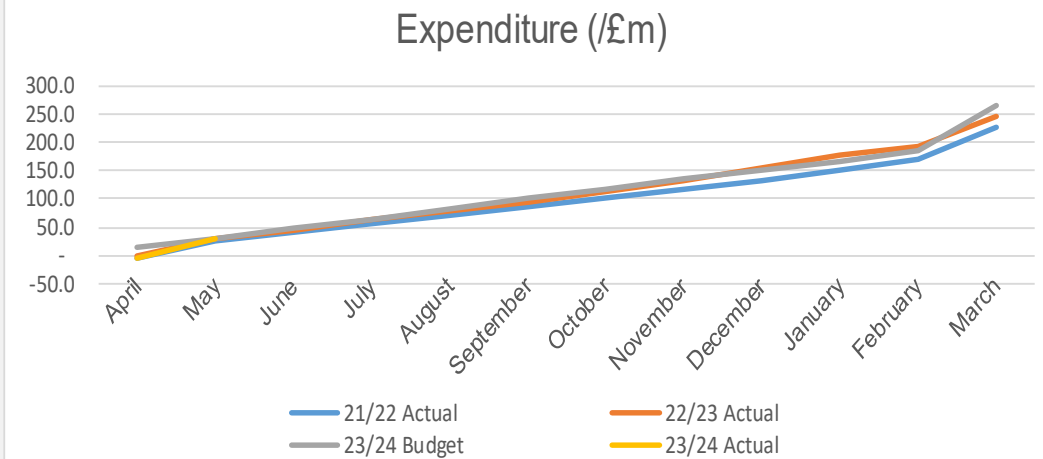


EXPENDITURE	Actual	Original Budget	Variance	Original Budget	Remaining Budget	Commentary
by Account Type	YTD £m	YTD £m	YTD £m	Full Year £m	Full Year %	
Staff	18.1	17.5	-0.6	110.3	84%	<p>Pay costs are ahead of budget (£0.3m) due mainly to staff numbers being ahead of our vacancy rate assumptions. There are budgets awaiting distribution which may mitigate this but it's likely that some Directorates will have a net pressure which will need to be addressed.</p> <p>Training costs are ahead of profile although 85% of the budget remains. This was flagged by the Executive Director of Corporate Strategy as requiring more funding and this will need to be considered by the Planning and Resources Group.</p> <p>Whilst travel & subsistence is broadly in line to budget, a number of Directorates have expressed concern that they are likely to exceed their current allocation.</p> <p>Staff costs will be further reviewed during August & September as part of the post by post trajectory forecast.</p>
Non Staff	7.1	7.1	-0.0	89.2	92%	<p>Overall, non staff costs are in line with the year to date profile. There are relatively minor variances between directorates. Some of the key points are:</p> <p>The recent forest fires will have an impact on the incident response budget in EPP and we have received an unfunded bid for review at the next Planning and Resources Group.</p> <p>We have concluded the information gathering stage of the Land Stewardship lessons learnt exercise. This will be considered at a future ET and Finance Committee meeting. There is an unallocated budget within EPP (Head of Land Stewardship) that is awaiting distribution to Operations for Land Management. Currently Land Stewardship activities within Operations are £0.1m ahead of profile.</p> <p>There are some profiling adjustments required which will be assessed during June and July.</p>
Revenue Projects	1.1	0.4	-0.7	12.7	91%	<p>This is predominantly linked to externally funded LIFE projects within Operations (£0.2m), Business Transformation (£0.1m), Grants & Partnerships (£0.1m) & SAC Rivers (£0.1m). The profiles will be revised in the following months, with limited risk to the full year budget.</p> <p>The NaCE Programme costs are inline with their respective budget.</p>
Capital Projects	4.3	5.0	0.7	54.1	92%	<p>Variance linked to three key programmes; Flood Risk, NaCE and Business Transformation.</p> <p>The Flood capital programme is ahead of profile by £0.6m, predominantly linked to over programming, which current stands at £11.6m. This is a considerable proportion of the programme and will need to be closely managed and reduced over the following months.</p> <p>The NaCE programme is currently behind profile by £0.6m, linked to Metal Mines & Water Quality projects. This programmed is over committed by 20% which is reasonable at this stage of the financial year. The reservoir programme is funded from within the Water Quality allocation and there is capacity to spend more within that programme if the Water Quality projects slip.</p> <p>The Business Transformation element is currently £0.8m behind profile, however the overprogramming stands at £3.1m, whilst the detail of the programme is being finalised. There is £1.7m awaiting PMO approval. The budget allocation will be reviewed again in light of the possible implications of the IR35 situation with HMRC.</p>
TOTAL: NRW	30.7	30.1	-0.6	266.3	88%	

Financial Performance – Expenditure Trends



EXPENDITURE TRENDS



Commentary:

As expected we are seeing an increase in expenditure this financial year compared to the same point in previous years. Spend in 2023-2024 was £30.7m compared to £27.8m in 2022-2023 at the end of May. The budget for this year has increased to £266.3m which is £19.4m greater than last financial year.

Financial Performance – Staff Costs



STAFF COSTS	Actual	Original Budget	Variance	Variance	Original Budget	Commentary
by Account Type	YTD £m	YTD £m	YTD £m	YTD %	Full Year £m	
Staff Costs	20.7	22.6	1.9	8%	135.2	An overspend on staff pay related costs of (£0.3m) at the end of May. This is mainly due to the vacancy level (7%) currently running below that assumed within the 2023/24 budget (8%) and a number of vacancies being project funded posts.
Pension Adjustment	-1.2	-1.2	0.0	0%	-7.0	
Vacancy Turnover Budget	0.0	-1.8	-1.8	100%	-10.4	The value of overprogramming posts currently stands at £1.7m, mainly where we are awaiting confirmation of grant funding from Welsh Government and the outcome from the Strategic Review of Charges.
Overprogramming Budget	0.0	-0.1	-0.1	100%	-1.7	
Directorate Staff Budget Undistributed To Position	0.0	-0.0	-0.0	100%	3.2	There is currently £3.2m of Directorate staff budget awaiting distribution to posts. This is mainly made up of funding for Marine and Integrated Workforce posts within Operations along with Flood, Regulation & Permitting posts within EPP.
Central Pay Contingency	0.0	0.0	0.0	0%	3.3	There is £3.3m within the central pay contingency which covers a potential 2% pay award (plus another 1% contingency).
Workforce Recharges	-2.5	-2.9	-0.4	12%	-17.6	Relates to vacancies on project funded posts
Sub Total - Staff Trajectory Costs	17.1	16.7	-0.3	-2%	104.9	
Other Staff Costs	1.0	0.8	-0.3	-35%	5.4	An overspend of (£0.3m) on other staff costs, mainly on temporary contractors (£130k), training (£78k) and mobile phone costs (£50k).
TOTAL: NRW	18.1	17.5	-0.6	-3%	110.3	

Financial Performance – Staff Trajectory

Current Vacancy Level (when comparing current staff to budgeted structure)	Current Month		Previous Month		Change	Commentary
	fte	%	fte	%	fte	
Budgeted Structure	2,601.6		2,598.5		3.1	<p>As reported in the staff cost summary, we currently have a vacancy rate of 7% against an assumed 8%. This is mainly impacting Operations and EPP. It's possible that the position will be mitigated through (1) staff in unbudgeted posts and (2) staff budgets awaiting distribution.</p> <p>Staff in unbudgeted posts includes posts funded from vacancy turnover (46.9fte). This is where Directorates are proactively reprioritising staff and other savings. So, there is a net figure of 37.7 fte that still need to be resolved. This will be assessed through the trajectory forecasting exercise in August and September. The Planning and Resources Group can also consider releasing more funding to staff costs to mitigate.</p>
Staff in Structure	2,416.3		2,398.9		17.4	
Current Vacancy Level	185.3	7.1%	199.6	7.7%		
Analysis of Vacancy Level						
Vacant Budget Posts	255.3	9.8%	262.9	10.1%	-7.6	
Impact of Part Time Staff in Budget Posts	14.6	0.6%	21.0	0.8%	-6.4	
Staff in Unbudgeted Posts	-84.6	-3.3%	-83.9	-3.2%	-0.7	
<p>*** NOTE****</p> <p>Please note that the vacancy level in this slide is based on current vacancy level for this month based on staff numbers. When comparing this to the financial variance there will be differences relating to:</p> <p>1) Financial Performance in the previous slide is cumulative and therefore subject to fluctuations in actual vacancy level over previous months.</p> <p>2) Timing delay in agency staff payments.</p> <p>3) Variances caused by spread on staff in pay points compared to budget level at pay point 3.</p> <p>4) Amendment to in year financial turnover targets to manage underspend from previous months.</p>						

Financial Performance – Revenue Projects



Revenue Projects	Actual	Original Budget	Variance	Original Budget	Remaining Budget	Commentary
by Programme	YTD	YTD	YTD	Full Year	Full Year	
	£m	£m	£m	£m	%	
External Funded	0.5	0.2	-0.3	4.5	88%	The current over spend predominantly relates to LIFE projects within Operations. The profiles will be revised in the following months, with limited risk to the full year budget. The full year budget of £4.5m is split between LIFE projects (£3.9m) and WG Grants (£0.6m).
Internal Funded	0.2	0.1	-0.2	3.2	93%	The current over spend is predominantly linked to a number of Land Stewardship projects within Operations and the SAC Rivers project in EPP. Within the full year budget of £3.2m, £1.2m relates to Land Stewardship activities, £0.5m SAC Rivers and £0.8m awaiting PMO/project setup.
NaCE	0.2	0.1	0.0	2.0	92%	The current May position is within £20k of the planned spend, with limited risk on delivering in line with the £2m full year budget. We have received confirmation of the revenue / capital split of the Nature Networks grant allocation and we will need to vire budgets between revenue and capital.
Other	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	100%	No spend to date. Funding linked to the flood revenue programme.
Business Transformation	0.1	0.0	-0.1	0.9	86%	The current position is slightly ahead of plan, linked to the Cardiff Opportunities project within Finance & Corporate Services. Budget profiles will be revised in the following months, with limited risk to the full year budget.
Grants	0.1	0.0	-0.1	2.0	94%	The Grants programme is currently ahead of profile at the end of May. Due to the nature of the programme there will always be a possible risk of under spend if the applicant is unable to fully meet the conditions of the grant, however, at this moment in time we anticipate the full budget being utilised.
TOTAL: NRW	1.1	0.4	-0.7	12.7	91%	

Financial Performance – Capital Projects



Capital Projects by Programme	Actual YTD £m	Original Budget YTD £m	Variance YTD £m	Original Budget Full Year £m	Remaining Budget Full Year %	Commentary
Business Transformation	0.6	1.4	0.8	5.7	90%	The Business Transformation Programme now includes the new D&I structure, which consists of Future Technology, D&I Rundown and ICT Strategic. The overall budget stands at £5.7m, however, there is £2.7m to be allocated from the internal funded project category, once the projects have been assured by PMO and project codes setup. The budget for Business Transformation as a whole is set at £11.8m, £8.4m Capital and £3.4m Revenue. Within the capital programme there is overprogramming of £3m. We expect this to reduce each month as we move through the year. A bespoke report is being developed to extract all activity; project and non project work, across the programme. The budget allocation will be reviewed again in light of the possible implications of the IR35 situation with HMRC.
External Funded	0.3	0.2	-0.1	4.5	93%	The programme is slightly ahead of profile at the end of May. A full review of all projects across the programme will be undertaken over the next two months, once the WEFO claims have been submitted for the end of June deadline. No major risks have been highlighted, other than a possible underspend on the Sands of Life Projects. Finance will continue to monitor this risk closely with the LIFE Programme Manager.
Flood Risk	1.6	1.0	-0.6	17.0	91%	The Flood Capital Programme stand at £17m which includes an overprogramming of £12m. The May position shows costs ahead of profile by £0.6m, predominantly linked to over programming. This is a considerable proportion of the programme and will need to be closely managed and reduced over the following months, to come inline with the overall allocation.
Internal Funded	1.0	1.0	0.0	7.7	87%	Current performance at the end of May is in line with budget. The full year allocation is linked to 4 key areas. (1) £2.7m for Business Transformation, awaiting a mixture of PMO approval and project codes to be setup. Once the project codes have been setup, this will move under the overall Business Transformation umbrella. (2) £1.8m for compensatory planting, funded by option fees. (3) £1.2m for the Water Resources programme and (4) £1.9m linked to Reservoir Safety. With the reservoir programme now being funded from within the NaCE programme under Water Quality, this will move under NaCE for future reporting.
NaCE	0.9	1.5	0.6	19.3	95%	The NaCE programme is currently behind profile by £0.6m, linked to the Metal Mines & Water Quality projects. This programmed is over committed by 20% which is reasonable at this stage of the financial year. The reservoir programme is now funded from within the Water Quality allocation and there is capacity to spend more within that programme if the Water Quality projects slip. There are still a number of projects awaiting governance approval. Based on the current profiles, the final 3 months of the year hold 50% of the full year budget. Overprogramming will be managed down through the year to equal the funding available.
TOTAL: NRW	4.3	5.0	0.7	54.1	92%	



NRW Board Paper

Date of meeting:	19 th July 2023
Title of Paper:	Business Plan Performance Dashboard 2022/23 and Internal Performance Report 2022/23
Paper Reference:	23-07-B10
Paper sponsored by:	Clare Pillman, Chief Executive
Paper prepared by:	Kirsten Hughes, Lead Specialist Advisor, Corporate Planning & Performance
Paper presented by:	Prys Davies, Executive Director of Corporate Strategy and Development
Purpose of the paper	Approval of the Q4 Business Plan Performance Dashboard and the Q4 Internal Performance report
Summary	We welcome the NRW Board's scrutiny regarding the Q4 performance and Year End position of the Business Plan Performance Dashboard report and the Internal Performance Report

Issue

1. The final quarter of the 22-23 Business Plan performance reporting cycle is complete. This paper presents the NRW Board with the opportunity to scrutinise performance.

Background

2. The Business Plan Performance Dashboard is one of the NRW Board's principal means of scrutinising delivery. It was developed in parallel with the 2022/23 Business Plan, working with the NRW Board, Executive Team and Leadership Team. The annual Business Plan relates to our Corporate Plan to March 2023; our new Corporate Plan was published in March 2023.
3. The Business Plan Dashboard Performance Report can be seen at Annex 1 and consists of a:
 - **Dashboard** providing an overview of performance against the 2022/23 measures set out by the strategic priorities reflected in our Business Plan.
 - **Topics index** set out by strategic priority to help navigate the report.

- **Summary for each Topic** reflecting progress across the area of work.
- **Details for each specific measure** with their year-end position.

4. The Internal Performance Report can be seen at Annex 2 and covers 11 internally focussed measures.

Assessment

5. The NRW Board is requested to scrutinise and approve the Business Plan Performance Dashboard Report, noting the key issues below. Further detail can be found in the report itself (Annex 1):

	Quarter 1 (1 April – 30 June 2022)	Quarter 2 (1 July to 30 Sept 2022)	Quarter 3 (1 Oct – 31 Dec 2022)	Predicted Quarter 4 Year End (to 31 st March 2023)	Actual Year End (to 31 st March 2023)
Red	1	2	2	2	0
N/A	1	0	1	0	0
Amber	6	12	12	11	12
Green	23	17	16	18	19
Total	31	31	31	31	31

6. There are 12 **Amber** measures at Year End. Two measures had been predicted to be **Red** at Year End but work through Q4 has brought them back to Amber. These are:

- **Produce Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs)**

Our final milestone for this measure is all FRMPs published (and FRMPs incorporated into Business as Usual and monitored). We have not fully completed this milestone activity. We have drafted the FRMP for Wales, supported by a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and issued these for external consultation on 1 March 2023 with a 12-week statutory consultation window. We have also briefed key stakeholders on the documents. This measure is **Amber** at year end because we have not met the final milestone in full, but we have produced the FRMP (and SEA) and they are out to external consultation. We flagged this as Red in Q3 as we were not certain we would be out to consultation in Q4, but we have achieved this.

- **Deliver programmes to review statutory water quality requirements**

Our final milestone for this measure is to finalise Dee and Severn River Basin Management Plans and identify statutory requirements for water quality in 2022/23 (and identify statutory requirements for water quality for delivery in 2023/24). We have finalised the Dee and Severn River Basin Management Plans and completed our internal sign-off of the Urban Waste Water Treatment (UWWT) review in Q4, though it remains for NRW to write to Welsh Government (WG) with our recommendation. Further work has been completed on the Nutrients Review, and we expect to finalise

outputs during Q1 of 2023/24. This measure is **Amber** at year end, with remaining work on track for completion within Q1 of 2023/24.

7. There are 19 measures that are **Green** at Year End. Some to note are:

- **Maintain flood risk assets in high-risk locations at target condition**

Our final milestone for this measure is 98% of flood risk assets in high-risk systems at target condition. We have achieved this and this measure is **Green**. We are at 98.3% at end of March 2023 which is better than predicted in Q3.

- **Delivering targeted action for declining species or those on the edge of extinction**

Our final milestone for this measure is to progress specific projects illustrating our work in this area (and submit the National Heritage Lottery Fund stage two application for Natur am Byth). We have completed this milestone activity. We have submitted the National Lottery Heritage Fund development phase application and secured the majority of match funding from charitable trusts-foundations and other public sector bodies. This measure is **Green** at year end.

- **Area of new woodland created on the NRW Estate**

Our final milestone for this measure is an additional 150 ha of land acquired / identified for woodland creation (contributing to 350 ha total over the life of the programme) plus 150 ha woodland created in 2022/23. We have secured six sites totalling 207 ha. This planting season we have established four sites creating a gross area of 164 ha of woodland, resulting in 95 ha of new canopy cover. Over the last year, we have carried out some high-profile stakeholder engagement with exciting outcomes and have also worked on the 84 ha of new woodland planted in recent years to ensure this establishes successfully. This measure is **Green** at year end.

8. The NRW Board is also requested to scrutinise and approve the Internal Performance Report, noting the key issues below. Further detail can be found in Annex 2.

	Quarter 1 (1 April – 30 June 2022)	Quarter 2 (1 July to 30 Sept 2022)	Quarter 3 (1 Oct – 31 Dec 2022)	Predicted Quarter 4 (to 31 st March 2023)	Actual Year End (to 31 st March 2023)
Red	1	1	3	1	0
Amber	5	3	1	2	3
Green	5	7	7	8	8
Total	11	11	11	11	11

9. Below are the measures to note for Q4. For further details, please refer to Annex 2.

- **Health & Safety Near Miss reporting** improved to Green at Year End (Red in last report), with an increase in the number of near misses reported compared with the previous year. Throughout Q4 we continued to raise the profile of this work to all senior management and Team Leaders reinforcing the importance of Near Miss reporting in avoiding actual incidents. Overall, for 2022/23 there have been 250 near miss reports (up from 220 for 2021/22) and we will continue to promote and manage this important measure from April onwards in line with reporting against the new Corporate Plan.
- As anticipated in our last report, **Absence** reporting is Amber at Year End, at 4.4%. This reflects an improvement at the end of Q3 (Red, at 5.1%). An action plan has been established in relation to sickness absence and changes are being made to systems to help identify reasons for sickness and provide more targeted support where appropriate.
- **Access to Information requests** ('ATIs') responded to within 20 days is Amber at Year End with four responses outside of this timescale over the last quarter. 92% of all ATIs and Environmental Information Requests were completed within 20 days during the year.
- **Payments performance** to our suppliers is Green at Year End (at 99%), up from 95% for the Q3 report. Over 3,000 invoices were processed in March, more than 50% up on the usual monthly volume. Yearly average of paying invoices increased to 94.1% this year.

Risks, Risk Appetite and opportunities

10. If the performance information provided does not accurately reflect progress towards delivery of the Business Plan, and the operation of NRW as an organisation, then the Executive Team and NRW Board will be unable to fulfil their role to scrutinise delivery.

Wider implications

11. **Finance:** 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 finance and performance papers are therefore closely linked.
12. **Equality:** The relevant Equality Impact Assessment covers our Well-being Statement, Business Plan 2022/23 and Corporate Plan to the end of March 2023

Next Steps

13. Following NRW Board approval, both Performance Reports will be discussed with Welsh Government and submitted to the Minister for Climate Change. They will be published on the Natural Resources Wales website.

Recommendation

14. We request the NRW Board approve the Q4 and Year End position of the Business Plan Performance Dashboard report and the Internal Performance Report.

Index of Annexes

Annex 1 – Business Plan Performance Dashboard Q4

Annex 2 – Internal Performance Report Q4

Approval / Consultation process

<p>Approval/consultation process</p> <p>Responsible:</p>	<p>Kirsten Hughes, Lead Specialist Advisor, Corporate Planning & Performance</p> <p>Sarah Williams, Head of Corporate Strategy and Programme Management Office</p> <p>Prys Davies, Executive Director of Corporate Strategy and Development</p>
<p>Accountable:</p>	<p>NRW Board</p>
<p>Consulted:</p>	<p>Leadership Team (Measure Owners)</p> <p>Executive Team</p>
<p>Informed:</p>	<p>Leadership Team</p> <p>Planning & Resources Group</p> <p>Executive Team</p> <p>NRW Board</p>

Annex 1: Business Plan Performance Dashboard 22/23 (Q4)

The green, amber or red status* of each of our [Business Plan](#)'s dashboard measures.

Responding to the climate emergency and the nature emergency...

Measure	Year end	Page
Support delivery of recommendations and actions from Renewable Energy deep dive	Amber	6
Develop a low emission fleet and deliver a low emission and climate adapted built estate	Amber	7
Implement Flood Review recommendations / actions	Amber	9
Maintain flood risk assets in high risk locations at target condition	Green	10
Properties with reduced level of risk or sustained protection through capital work	Green	11
Produce Flood Risk Management Plans	Amber	12
Priority actions undertaken on protected sites across Wales to improve condition of features	Green	14
Delivering targeted action for declining species or those on the edge of extinction	Green	15
Management of programmes to address and restore habitats across Wales	Green	17
Action undertaken to restore Welsh peatlands including degraded NRW Estate peatland	Green	18
Develop the biodiversity and cultural value of the NNRs in our direct care	Amber	20
UKWAS Corrective Action Requests and Observations progress	Amber	21
Area of new woodland created on the NRW Estate	Green	22
Timber volume offered to market	Green	23
Deliver actions in the Wales Marine Protected Area (MPA) Network Management Action Plan	Green	25
Permits and licences issued within statutory timescales	Amber	27
Category 1 and category 2 compliance breaches are subjected to further assessment	Green	28
Decision on an appropriate enforcement response within 3 months	Green	29
Response to incidents initially categorised as 'High' within 4 hours	Green	31

*For [key to green, amber and red performance assessment](#): see page 54.

Using our expertise, alongside that of others...

Measure	Year end	Page
Complete re-design of our freshwater quality monitoring network...	Amber	34
Response to environmental governance issues and liaison with Interim Assessor	Green	36
Inform development of Welsh Government future land management policy & legislation	Green	37
Develop and implement programme to examine a proposed new National Park	Green	38
Work to set strategic direction for development and implementation of projects	Green	40

Improve water quality through raising awareness...

Measure	Year end	Page
Deliver programmes to review statutory water quality requirements	Amber	43
Deliver NRW input to the various Water Company Planning Programmes	Green	44
NRW progress on key deliverables for Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) Rivers Project	Amber	46
Progress of our work to reduce pollution from metal mines	Amber	47

Involving a diverse range of stakeholders...

Measure	Year end	Page
Deliver against agreed actions for Year 1 of 'All Together' (Diversity and Inclusion Strategy)	Green	50
Ongoing development and delivery of combined training, resource and projects	Green	51
Progress of Nature and Us / Natur a Ni programme	Amber	53

Developing NRW into an excellent organisation...

See 'Internal Performance report' for measure positions related to this priority

For [key to green, amber and red performance assessment](#): see page 54.

Direct links to each Topic in this performance report (*links below / right*)

Responding to the climate emergency and the nature emergency...

- [Decarbonisation \(page 5\)](#)
- [Managing Flood Risk \(page 8\)](#)
- [Nature Emergency \(page 13\)](#)
- [Habitat Restoration \(page 16\)](#)
- [NRW Estate \(page 19\)](#)
- [Marine Environment \(page 24\)](#)
- [Regulation \(page 26\)](#)
- [Incident management \(page 30\)](#)

Using our expertise, alongside that of others...

- [Improving and presenting evidence... \(page 33\)](#)
- [Providing Advice and Guidance \(page 35\)](#)
- [Using Area Statement \(page 39\)](#)

Improve water quality through raising awareness...

- [Water Planning \(page 42\)](#)
- [Water Management \(page 45\)](#)

Involving a diverse range of stakeholders...

- [Diversity and Inclusion \(page 49\)](#)
- [Nature and Us \(page 52\)](#)

Each topic report (*linked above / left*) reflects a short summary of recent progress in relation to that topic and also states the Business Plan dashboard measures related to that topic

Priority: Responding to the climate emergency and the nature emergency, focussing on Nature Based Solutions and Decarbonisation

The climate and nature emergencies are inextricably linked - what we deliver to address climate change can also help reduce biodiversity loss and vice versa. Nature based solutions lie at the heart of this. Much of our work provides these multiple benefits, improving biodiversity and locking in carbon through our planned work on peatland restoration, woodland creation, and management of marine inter-tidal habitats.

Our business as usual work reflects a huge part of many people's jobs. For example, monitoring and collating data to inform our decision making on reducing Wales' and NRW's carbon footprint; managing our estate to maximise carbon sequestration opportunities; planning for and responding to drought and flooding incidents as well as the emergence of new threats to our natural environment such as pests and diseases. We control carbon emissions through our regulatory duties, permitting the use of emerging technologies that contribute to the decarbonisation of our economy.

Our [Business Plan](#) sets out the following topics in relation to this priority:

- [Responding to the climate emergency - decarbonisation](#)
- [Responding to the climate emergency - managing flood risk](#)
- [Responding to the nature emergency](#)
- [Nature based solutions - habitat restoration](#)
- [Nature based solutions - enabling tree planting and woodland creation](#)
- [Nature based solutions - managing the NRW Estate](#)
- [Nature based solutions - managing the marine environment](#)
- [Responding to the climate and nature emergencies - regulation](#)
- [Responding to the climate and nature emergencies - incident management and response](#)

The following pages reflect recent progress for topics with measures in the Business Plan dashboard, along with the latest performance position in relation to the Business Plan dashboard measure/s for each.

Topic: Responding to the climate emergency - decarbonisation

Topic summary progress:

- The climate change programme has moved to become under oversight of the Climate Emergency sub-group. With the plans for creation of the Well-being Boards in development, the future governance of this programme will need review early in 2023/24.
- Amongst the key wider deliverables of the programme this year has been: expansion of the peatland restoration programme; development of a bespoke NRW climate change training course that has been successfully trialled with 200 staff; development and completion of Forward Plans that provide a long-term direction (through to 2030) for decarbonisation of our fleet, transport, built estate and supply chain; drafting of an Active and Sustainable Travel Plan; development of plans/contracts for roll out of electric vehicle (EV) charging and hydrotreated Vegetable Oil infrastructure (HVO) across our sites in 2023/24; a review of carbon assessment tools for use in our projects and with our supply chain; provision of policy advice to Welsh Government (WG) and others e.g. providing input to the interim review of Climate Conscious Wales; embedding consideration of carbon in several key large contracts during procurement; improving the scope and efficiency of our organisational carbon footprint reporting process; delivery of a range of internal and external comms, e.g. for COP15, Wales Climate Week.

Topic owner: Ruth Jenkins

Business Plan dashboard measure/s for this topic:

- Support delivery of recommendations and actions from Renewable Energy deep dive
- Develop a low emission fleet and deliver a low emission and climate adapted built estate

[To return to start of report - see [Business Plan Performance Dashboard](#) - pages 1 and 2]

Measure: Support delivery of recommendations and actions from Renewable Energy deep dive

This measure reflects our activity to support delivery of [recommendations and actions arising from Welsh Government's \(WG\) Renewable Energy deep dive](#), recognising our contribution in relation to these in order for Wales to at least fully meet its energy needs and tackle the nature and climate emergencies.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final milestone for this measure is to complete the first year of NRW's contribution to WG's Renewable Energy Deep Dive Recommendations**. We have completed the milestone activity in terms of NRW's contribution, noting that there have been implementation delays that are out of NRW's control to the deep dive actions overall.
- We have completed the review of resource needs and provided the relevant information to WG, including iterations of an SLA for renewable advice and evidence, combined with marine regulatory improvement resource needs (actions in the end to end review). The indication is that WG intend to fund 1/3 of the costs identified, which will mean that the current service levels will be impacted in renewable energy advisory and evidence as well as a reduction in the proposed marine regulation improvements programme.
- We have supported and provided advice in the end-to-end review of marine licencing, consenting and advisory processes; we have progressed the transfer of JNCC offshore advisory function; and we have identified marine evidence gaps and developed an SMNR actions tool for WG windfarm schemes. Terrestrial evidence gaps work is wholly dependent on resources from the SLA bid, but this will not deliver sufficient funding to cover terrestrial evidence.
- We have concluded the data analysis and spatial mapping of evidence to support the identification of marine 'strategic resource areas to signpost areas for development of different renewable energy technologies.
- We have delivered and concluded NRW's contribution to 4/7 actions. Partially concluded 3/7 - the partial completion are due to factors outside of NRW's control - funding from WG and pace from a number of others – NRW's contribution is complete for the year. This measure is **Amber** at year end.

What we are doing next:

- This measure is not likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24.

Measure owner: Ruth Jenkins

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Amber	Amber	Amber

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

[To return to start of report - see [Business Plan Performance Dashboard](#) - pages 1 and 2]

Measure: Develop a low emission fleet and deliver a low emission and climate adapted built estate

This measure reflects activity forming part of our Adfywio/Renewal programme to develop a low emission fleet and deliver a low emission and climate adapted built estate.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final milestone for this measure is deliver Adfywio programme commitments for 2022/23**
- We have partially completed this milestone activity. With some delays due to significant staff absences over the year.
- Over the last year, we have closed Cantref Court and progressed the Cardiff Accommodation Opportunity including developing a project brief and completing staff consultation. We have rolled out the use of HVO fuel in our fleet and procured the design of an NRW wide integrated EV charging infrastructure (EVCI).
- This measure is **Amber** at year end.

What we are doing next

- We will now seek to complete the design of the EVCI and procure phase 2 build and operate. The accommodation strategy was approved in FY 2022/23 and will be published in Q1 of 2023/24. The move to Cathays Park from Ty Cambria will be completed by March 2024. We also drafted an Interim Fleet Purchase Policy, supporting a transition to an ultra-low emission fleet, to be reviewed for approval in Q1 of 2023/24.
- This measure is likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24.

Measure owner: Victoria Rose-Piper

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Amber	Amber	Green	Amber

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

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Topic: Responding to the climate emergency - managing flood risk

Topic summary progress:

- Our **capital programme** has progressed well, with schemes at Llyn Tegid, Cowbridge, Afon Wydden and Llanfair TH all completed on site this year, and construction started at other significant schemes such as Stephenson St (Newport) and Ammanford. We exceeded the target of 1,000 properties provided with improved or sustained levels of protection.
- The **Flood Recovery and Review Implementation Programme** has progressed well, and we have delivered 59 of the 74 actions, as planned. Continued work is needed on incident rota numbers, and on flood warning areas. We have produced closure reports for 10 of the 12 work areas and will complete the remainder in 2023/24. These reports capture the evidence of delivery for the complete actions and provide clear evidence of transfer to other work programmes where the action is ongoing or for delivery over the longer term.
- Our routine annual **maintenance programmes** have continued, as we operate on a prioritised basis within the budgets available to us. We continue to make process and delivery improvements in the asset management area.
- We have **34 projects** in our **Improvements Programme**, at various stages. Several are significant ICT projects which are delivering core customer-facing systems, such as the **Flood Warning Service** replacement project and the **Telemetry** replacement project, both of which are progressing well.
- We have continued to address the relevant recommendations from the 'Toddbrook review' into **reservoir safety**, as we seek to do more to go beyond compliance to ensure safety.
- We have issued our **Flood Risk Management Plan**, and associated Strategic Environmental Assessment, for external consultation, with publication scheduled for 2023/24.
- Overall, much significant work continues to be delivered. The main challenge remains volume of work and rising expectations on our staff. **Recruitment** is challenging, with **skills shortages** across the industry. We have increased our activities on the **skills and capability** agenda in response to this issue and risk.

Topic owner: Jeremy Parr

Business Plan dashboard measure/s for this topic:

- Implement Flood Review recommendations / actions
- Maintain flood risk assets in high risk locations at target condition
- Properties with reduced level of risk or sustained protection through capital work
- Produce Flood Risk Management Plans

Measure: Implement Flood Review recommendations / actions

The February 2020 floods were the most significant floods in Wales since the 1970s, and our Review into our own performance identified areas for improvement and recommended actions. This measure reflects delivery tracking of the remaining improvements identified in [our Review](#).

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our final milestone for this measure is to implement recommendations / actions and complete work area and programme closure reports by year end (with 59 of the 74 actions undertaken, and the 15 longer term actions in the other three work areas not covered by programme closure transferred to our relevant NRW Business Boards for tracking).
- We have achieved this milestone in part, with the 59 actions being completed.
- We have completed 10 of the 12 closure reports with the remaining two planned for sign off in Q1 2023/24. We have not completed all work area closure reports, or the programme closure report because we are applying high levels of scrutiny to provide assurance that all actions are complete, and that the remaining actions have a clear pathway for delivery; plus also that any outstanding issues and risks as well as any further next steps have been identified, again with clear pathways for their management. We will create a programme transition report that will cover this information, to provide the necessary level of assurance. If and when this report is approved, the programme can be considered for closure.
- The remaining 15 longer term actions are to be managed via Business Boards.
- This measure is **Amber** at year end as we have not met all of the milestones set at the start of the year, but we have made substantial progress and there is a clear pathway for delivery.

What we are doing next:

- We will complete the remaining two work area closure reports, and the programme transition report before then moving to programme closure. This measure is likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24 until this programme is closed.

Measure owner: Jeremy Parr

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

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

NRW owns and/or maintains 3,500 assets in high risk systems, forming part of the national flood defence infrastructure, providing benefit to thousands of properties in Wales. It is vitally important that these assets are maintained, as a poor condition asset anywhere within the system can impact that location – it is only as good as its weakest link.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our final target for this measure is **98% of flood risk assets in high risk systems at target condition**. We have achieved this and this measure is **Green**. We are at 98.3% at end of March 2023.
- We currently have 62 below required condition assets across Wales and require 70 or fewer to achieve the target, therefore we are 8 assets above Green.
- Asset inspections are carried out on a rolling basis. Issues which cause an asset to become a ‘below required condition’ asset may be found at any time. This measure is a snapshot in time, and we continually update our data.
- During the last quarter, we made fixes to 26 assets but also 9 different assets have become below their required condition due to issues found.
- Condition of our flood assets is a hugely important area of our work, which is reflected by it being a topic that is on the strategic risk register. We are also making improvements to our data and the management information, so that we can be confident we are on top of this going forward. This includes acting on the benchmarking work we have done with the Institute of Asset Management, and also acting on the improvements identified through internal audit. These improvements are also about our maintenance records and scheduling, not just asset condition.

What we are doing next:

- We will continue to monitor the progress with the remaining assets that are below required condition with a view to completing fixes to at least 34 within the next financial year. Plans for the remainder and those that have been added within the last month will be drawn up.
- We will continue with our asset inspection regimes and continue with our plans to make improvements to processes and systems. This measure is likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24.

Measure owner: Jeremy Parr

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Amber	Amber	Amber	Green

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

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Measure: Properties with reduced level of risk or sustained protection through capital work

This measure reflects the number of properties benefitting from a reduced level of flood risk (moving from a higher risk category to a lower through a new scheme or improvement works) or sustained level of flood risk (through capital maintenance work).

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final milestone for this measure is for 1000 additional properties directly provided with reduced risk / sustained level of protection by year end.**
- We have surpassed the target by achieving 1,647 additional properties directly provided with reduced risk / sustained level of protection this year.
- Over the last year, we have provided increased protection to 33 properties at Llanfair TH as well sustaining the level of protection to hundreds of properties at locations such as Bala, Llandudno Junction and Cowbridge.
- This measure is **Green** at year end.

What we are doing next:

- Our capital programme of work is on a rolling basis, with many projects spanning several financial years. We will continue with our construction and our project development work to ensure we have schemes to deliver improved or sustained levels of protection that address flood risk in high risk priority locations, in future years.
- This measure is likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24, as it is a key indicator for flood risk management activities.

Measure owner: Jeremy Parr

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Green	Green	Green

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

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Measure: Produce Flood Risk Management Plans

This measure reflects our progress in producing updated [Flood Risk Management Plans \(FRMPs\)](#) and includes updates in relation to their development, consultation around them, their publication and future monitoring. The updated plans will identify what is at risk of flooding alongside the objectives and measures that we propose to manage the risk of flooding.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- **Our final milestone for this measure is all FRMPs published (and FRMPs incorporated into Business as Usual and monitored)**
- We have not fully completed this milestone activity. We have drafted the FRMP for Wales, supported by a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and have issued these for external consultation on 1 March 2023 with a 12 week statutory consultation window. We have also briefed key stakeholders on the documents.
- The drafting timeline was impacted by key staff absences, and the internal consultation and editing taking longer than expected. We have though ensured that quality was not compromised in delivery, but this has meant that we went to external consultation later in the year than we intended (at the start of the year).
- This measure is **Amber** at year end because we have not met the final milestone in full, but we have produced the FRMP (and SEA) and they are out to external consultation and there is a pathway to delivery. We flagged this as Red in Q3 as we were not certain we would be out to consultation in Q4, but we have achieved this.

What we are doing next:

- We will edit the documents as needed after the consultation window closes (24 May), with the intention of publishing them as soon as we can in 2023/24. Final publication is likely to be in Q2 2023/24.
- This measure is likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24 as the final output will be delivered in 2023/24.

Measure owner: Jeremy Parr

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Amber	Red	Amber

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

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Topic: Responding to the nature emergency

Topic summary progress:

- Nature and People Thriving Together – our new Corporate Plan is now live which sets out how we will use our tools and powers to ensure Wales steps up to meet the 2030 targets for climate and nature and focusses our passion and collective action towards nature's recovery, resilience to climate change and minimising pollution through the sustainable management of our natural resources.
- Working with Welsh Government (WG) to develop and deliver Nature Networks, a Welsh 3-year costed programme to enhance biodiversity and build ecosystem resilience with protected sites at its core.
- Implementing the recommendations of the WG Deep Dive into Biodiversity working with partners and stakeholders to contribute towards the Global Biodiversity Framework targets including protecting 30% of the land and sea by 2030, tackling our nature and climate crises.
- Working with WG and National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) to deliver the Nature Networks Fund - a grant programme to support projects which will strengthen the resilience of Wales' network of protected land and marine sites and support a green recovery for nature and communities.

Topic owner: Martyn P. Evans

Business Plan dashboard measure/s for this topic:

- Priority actions undertaken on protected sites across Wales to improve condition of features
- Delivering targeted action for declining species or those on the edge of extinction

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Measure: Priority actions undertaken on protected sites across Wales to improve condition of features

Improving protected site condition is essential for maintaining biodiversity and building ecosystem resilience. This measure reflects how we are progressing with actions to improve protected sites across Wales to fully provide ecosystem service benefits and function as a core part of a resilient ecological network - enabling habitats and wildlife to thrive.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- **Our final milestone for this measure is 80% of planned actions completed.**
- We have completed this milestone activity. Nature Networks funding from WG has funded significant extra activity, having funded and completed conservation improvement actions on 160 separate Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
- The list of all Nature Networks funded activity achieved within 2022/23 was not finalised, therefore not all will necessarily be reflected in the report extracted from data in the corporate database. However, despite this reporting anomaly, the estimated achievement (measured against our ambition of 199 actions in Q1 and available Nature Networks data) is in excess of 80%. This measure is **Green** at year end.

What we are doing next:

- We will now continue to deliver through Operational activities and time limited funded projects and programmes including Nature Networks, Natur am Byth, Sands of LIFE, LIFE Quaking Bogs, New LIFE for Welsh Raised Bogs, LIFE Dee River, Four Rivers for LIFE and National Peatland Action Programme.
- This measure is likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24. Following publication of the Corporate Plan to 2030, we will work to develop appropriate targets and milestones to measure and track progress towards improving the condition of features at protected sites.

Measure owner: Martyn P. Evans

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Green	Green	Green

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

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Measure: Delivering targeted action for declining species or those on the edge of extinction

This measure reflects actions to address biodiversity loss and build ecosystems resilience - what we are doing as targeted actions for declining species or those on the edge of extinction in Wales. Unless we reverse biodiversity decline and build resilient ecosystems, our well-being and that of future generations will suffer.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- **Our final milestone for this measure is to progress specific projects illustrating our work in this area (and submit the National Heritage Lottery Fund stage two application for Natur am Byth)**
- This measure is **Green** at year end. We have completed this milestone activity. We have submitted the National Lottery Heritage Fund development phase application for £4,160,389 of the 4-year delivery costs of £7,949,472. We have secured the majority of match funding from charitable trusts-foundations and other public sector bodies.
- Over the last year, we have delivered habitat restoration work for freshwater pearl mussel at three sites and have successfully bred mussels at the NRW hatchery for release at these sites. We have facilitated curlew recovery by supporting a tagging programme to better understand movements of breeding curlew in upland and lowland farmed landscapes. We have reintroduced water voles in Oxwich and completed surveys of rare invertebrates to inform site management.

What we are doing next:

- We will now prepare for a successful outcome from National Lottery Heritage Fund ensuring momentum on the programme into the delivery phase and we reach targets for delivery phase commencement in September 2023.
- This measure is likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24 as we move to the delivery phase for Natur am Byth and develop other species recovery projects.

Measure owner: Martyn P. Evans

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Red	Green	Green

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

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Topic: Nature based solutions - habitat restoration

Topic summary progress:

NRW is progressing the priorities of the Vital Nature Strategy and Work Programme, putting biodiversity and ecosystem resilience at the centre of our work including:

- Working with Welsh Government to develop and deliver Nature Networks, a Welsh 3-year costed programme to enhance biodiversity and build ecosystem resilience with protected sites supporting the actions in biodiversity deep dive. This includes supporting NLHF and WG in grant funding allocations and the delivery of terrestrial and marine projects across Wales.
- Delivery of the peatland restoration programme and working with WG to 'upscale' peatland restoration targets. Both to ensure that peatlands are sustainably managed and safeguarded to recover their critical biodiversity resource, store carbon, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and play their role as a component of Natural Flood Risk Management.
- Delivery of the River Restoration Programme including projects to address physical modifications within rivers, safeguard freshwater pearl mussels across Wales and address catchment wide pressures.
- Continuing to build a programme for grassland restoration with a Pilot Project underway.

Topic owner: Ruth Jenkins

Business Plan dashboard measure/s for this topic:

- Management of programmes to address and restore habitats across Wales
- Action undertaken to restore Welsh peatlands including degraded NRW Estate peatland

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Measure: Management of programmes to address and restore habitats across Wales

This measure reflects our progress with management of programmes to address and restore habitats across Wales, including updates throughout the year on the Nature Networks Programme, Grassland programme and LIFE Quake project.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final milestone for this measure is to establish new WG and EU LIFE restoration programmes (including complete the implementation of the LIFE Quake project set up phase)**
- We have completed this milestone activity. LIFE Quake and four Rivers for LIFE Teams have been recruited and other implementation phase activities completed. The LIFE projects are starting to deliver key actions, including starting construction of track to provide access to the east side of Crymlyn Bog and completion of construction of a new shed to house facilities at Cynrig hatchery.
- The Nature Networks programme has delivered planned actions including approximately 130 new or renewed Land Management Agreements covering 14,000 ha; Grassland and Wood pasture reports have been received. These may lead on to larger scale projects in 2023/24.
- This measure is **Green** at year end.

What we are doing next:

- We will now continue to deliver the five LIFE projects, three of which end in 2024 (Sands of LIFE and LIFE Raised Bogs in June 2024 and Dee LIFE in December 2024). Further develop the Nature Networks Programme to ensure the improvement in condition of SSSIs continues in 2023/24. We will review the Grassland and Wood Pasture reports to consider how we can take this work forward in 2023/24.
- This measure is not likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24 as three of the LIFE projects end in 2024.

Measure owner: Ruth Jenkins

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Green	Amber	Green

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

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Measure: Action undertaken to restore Welsh peatlands including degraded NRW Estate peatland

We are continuing to progress a national programme of peatland restoration across Wales. This measure reflects key action taken to [restore Welsh peatlands](#), including on the NRW Estate. It includes an update on the number of hectares of peatland restoration activity undertaken on the NRW Estate and on other land.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final milestone for this measure is to deliver 450 ha of peatland restoration activity as part of the National Peatland Action Plan (including approximately 120 ha on the NRW Estate)**.
- We have completed this milestone activity.
- We estimate that we have delivered a total of 629 ha of restoration activity across Wales including 85 ha on the NRW estate.
- This measure is **Green** at year end.

What we are doing next:

- We will now continue with the National Peatland Action Plan programme delivery in 2023/24.
- This measure is likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24 with the level of ambition depending on funding.

Measure owner: Martyn P. Evans

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Green	Green	Green

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

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Topic: Nature based solutions - managing the NRW Estate

Topic summary progress:

- The NRW land estate is the WG Woodland Estate and National Nature Reserves (NNRs) for which we are responsible. At 160,000 ha, it is 7% of the size of Wales. It includes among other things:
 - 80 designated Special Areas of Conservation and SSSI's, 56 NNRs.
 - 40% of Wales woodland, 19,000 ha of ancient woodland sites, and 60% of Wales' sustainable timber harvest.
 - 3.5 million visits per year on 955 km walking, 25 accessible; 8 horse-riding trails; 566 km mountain biking trails; 6 visitor centres; and 3,702 km of forest roads for recreation as well as forest management.
 - 441 MW installed capacity of renewable energy. 32.9 Mt Carbon stocks (81% woodland, 9% bog/fen, 10% other).
 - 27 reservoirs, 160 ex-industrial spoil tips, 18,000 ash trees to make safe, 200 km unauthorised bike trails to sort.
- Our main aim for the Estate is sustainable management of natural resources. This costs £51 million per year of which £30 million to £40 million is funded by sustainable enterprise. With these resources we are:
 - Adapting to climate change and enabling society to adapt, especially for flood risk and to safeguard clean water.
 - Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by maintaining the area of woodland, converting degraded deep peat into healthy wet peatland habitat, providing harvestable timber; and supporting increases in on-shore wind-power.
 - Improving ecological processes to enable nature to adapt to climate change and protecting key species / habitats.
 - Providing opportunities for people to enjoy the outdoors benefiting health, well-being and social capital.
 - Enabling communities to use their local NRW Estate. Supporting sustainable private enterprise.
- The measures in this topic illustrate this range of services. Action undertaken to restore Welsh peatlands including NRW Estate peatland and management to address and restore habitats across Wales are also relevant.
- We hold ourselves to high standards of sustainable land management, including for example Forest Industry Safety Accord requirements and ISO45001 health and safety management standards; UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS), and ISO14001 environmental management system.

Topic owner: Dominic Driver

Business Plan dashboard measure/s for this topic:

- Develop the biodiversity and cultural value of the NNRs in our direct care
- UKWAS Corrective Action Requests and Observations progress
- Area of new woodland created on the NRW Estate
- Timber volume offered to market

Measure: Further develop the biodiversity and cultural value of the NNRs in our direct care

This measure reflects the delivery of priority actions being carried out to further develop the value of National Nature Reserves (NNRs) in NRW's direct care. The priority actions reflect those we have deemed the most important to generate beneficial ecological processes.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final milestone for this measure is 80% of 133 priority actions across 44 NNRs delivered (80% of planned priority actions)**. This measure is **Amber** at year end.
- We have not reached this milestone in full. Of the 133 priority actions, we completed 83 (68%), partially completed two, and were unable to start 36, 11 were no longer required, one was unreported. We worked on 34 out of the 44 NNRs we had planned to invest in, or 77%.
- The main reasons for non-delivery of actions were;
 - Budget constraints set at end Q3 to manage a forecast over-spend across NRW
 - Area specific issues with assenting work
 - Contractor availability.

What we are doing next:

- We will develop a new strategy for NNRs in our care as part of the Corporate Plan. We will be an exemplar nature positive organisation by...building the resilience of high nature-value sites on the land in our care, especially our NNRs and other protected sites, and contributing to the 30 by 30 target, through managing soil, water, vegetation and other aspects to create ecological processes that sustain the high nature value.
- This measure is unlikely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24. A revised, wider indicator will probably be developed to track progress on the new strategy.

Measure owner: Dominic Driver

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Green	Amber	Amber

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

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Measure: UKWAS Corrective Action Requests and Observations progress

This measure reports on the annual UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) external audit.

Being certified via UKWAS shows we [sustainably manage the Welsh Government Woodland Estate \(WGWE\)](#) reaching Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) and Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) international standards.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final milestone for this measure is fewer Corrective Action Requests (CARs) open after this year's audit than after last year's audit.**
- We did not achieve this, but we were close. The improving trend since we re-organised in 2019 remains evident. In 2021, we had one Major CAR, one Minor CAR and five Observations (Obs) open after audit. We now have five Minor CARs and two Obs. While we have more Minor CARs open now than at last year, this is the first year since 2018 that we have not had a Major CAR.
- We have retained certification for the 21st year in a row. Ours are the longest running continuously certified state forests in the world, along with the state forests of England and Scotland.
- This measure is **Amber** at year end.

What we are doing next:

- We are now working to address the CARs and Obs ready for the June 2023 audit and continuing to make further improvements in sustainable forest management on the land in our care.
- This measure is likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24.

Measure owner: Dominic Driver

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

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Measure: Area of new woodland created on the NRW Estate

This measure reflects the area of new woodland created on the NRW Estate (hectares acquired / identified if already in ownership and hectares where work is done to establish new woodland by planting and/or natural colonisation). It covers the contribution of NRW's land estate to woodland creation and progress on the commitment to the WGWE being bigger in 25 years than it was in 2018.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final milestone for this measure is an additional 150 ha of land acquired / identified for woodland creation (contributing to 350 ha total over the life of the programme) plus 150 ha woodland created in 2022/23.**
- We have secured six sites totalling 207 ha. This planting season we have established four sites creating a gross area of 164 ha, resulting in 95 ha of new canopy cover.
- Over the last year, we have carried out some high-profile stakeholder engagement with exciting outcomes and have also worked on the 84 ha of new woodland planted in recent years to ensure this establishes successfully.
- This measure is **Green** at year end.

What we are doing next:

- We will now be working to complete two more sites (96 ha) currently with our solicitors. We will continue the maintenance programme on planted sites, planning and stakeholder engagement for new sites ahead of the next planting season.
- This measure is unlikely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24. We will probably have a revised, wider indicator to track progress within the Corporate Plan.

Measure owner: Dominic Driver

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Green	Green	Green

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

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Measure: Timber volume offered to market

This measure reflects a commitment set out in the [Timber Sales and Marketing Plan](#). We currently offer an available timber harvest of around two thirds of the total Welsh market, generating significant income and supporting the timber economy in Wales

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final target for this measure is 750,000 m³ offered to market.**
- We have not achieved this as we have offered 719,700 m³.
- Over the last year, we achieved 96% of target, which is comfortably within the margin for this measure.
- This measure is **Green** at year end.

What we are doing next:

- We will now prepare to publish the first of four planned sale events for 2023/24. Will be working to overcome the challenges posed to increase volume offer.
- This measure is likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24.

Measure owner: Elsie Grace

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Green	Green	Green

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

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Topic: Nature based solutions – managing the marine environment

Topic summary progress:

- The marine programme continues to be steered as a single integrated programme of marine work across NRW.
- Work has commenced and continued this year in priority areas such as: delivery of the Offshore Renewable Energy Programme and support of renewable energy deep dive implementation for land, water and sea- despite no additional in year funding as bid for, staff continue to deliver a strong prioritised service at cost to them at times; continuing to implement work in the new marine projects team to deliver capital funded projects under Nature Networks to improve the condition of Marine Protected Areas; advising WG on environmental considerations in developing a spatial approach to marine planning; implementing our guidance on assessing coastal squeeze; working with partners to deliver the marine Area Statement; managing the Burry and Dee cockle fisheries; delivery our Dee conservancy function; continuing to deliver fisheries environmental impact assessments under the assessing Welsh Fishing Activity project to Welsh Government; supporting UK process for development of new Marine Fisheries Management Plans; delivering to our marine evidence programme and revised our priority evidence needs; and responding to proposed changes in environmental management policy and legislation from Defra and exploring implications with WG as well as influencing WG's Infrastructure Bill.

Topic owner: Rhian Jardine

Business Plan dashboard measure/s for this topic:

- [Deliver actions in the Wales Marine Protected Area \(MPA\) Network Management Action Plan](#)

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Measure: Deliver actions in the Wales Marine Protected Area (MPA) Network Management Action Plan

This measure reflects progress with [Marine Protected Areas network](#) management actions. The network is a key tool in developing greater resilience in the marine environment and is an integral consideration for all developments in the marine area, through Wales National Marine Plan policy (WNMP).

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final milestone for this measure is to deliver 100% actions by year end (and sign off and report on final delivery)**. We have completed this milestone activity. We have completed the NRW actions in the management action plan and we have sent the evidence to WG. The landfill project - our new funded action for this year was completed on time and the results show a significant threat to MPA features in the future.
- The MPA Management Steering met in person in February 2023 and the new actions for this coming year were decided, both new actions that were submitted by NRW to the action plan were successful in gaining funding and they will be delivered in the coming year. NRW were also involved in a couple of other actions being submitted by partners and these were also successful in gaining funding. Swansea University submitted an action for the first time this year and NRW were very involved in shaping the successful bid - they will be working on tracking Twaite Shad from the Tywi in the marine environment - very important for casework.
- This measure is **Green** at year end.

What we are doing next:

- We will now work on the NRW actions preparing specification for contracts to be let after April and work with partners to make sure that their actions are successful.
- This measure is not likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24 as we have new actions in the action plan.

Measure owner: Rhian Jardine

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Green	Green	Green

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

[To return to start of report - see [Business Plan Performance Dashboard](#) - pages 1 and 2]

Topic: Responding to the climate and nature emergencies - Regulation

Topic summary progress:

- Determining permits, monitoring compliance and enforcing is fundamental to responding to the climate and nature emergency. We have been working to develop approaches to support decarbonisation and nature based solutions.
- Overall for the year, we issued 86% of permits and licences within statutory timescales. We successfully completed the determination of the Water Resources New Authorisations applications by the statutory December 2022 deadline, and also completed the BREF (Best Available Techniques Reference documents) permit reviews for the five Energy from Waste Installations. We continue to liaise closely with WG in relation to their end-to-end review of marine licensing and have successfully implemented the new general licences following conclusion of the Wild Bird Review. Recruitment to technical vacancies continues to prove difficult resulting in delays to determination of some permits. We have updated our duty making guidance to help improve processes and application quality.
- We are delivering targeted or prioritised compliance work despite significant constraints including funding, recruitment and turnover. Compliance activity is under pressure from reactive investigation and enforcement work. Where we have identified breaches, effort has been focused on following it up to ensure we bring operators back into compliance. The review of permit application charges resulted re-investment in compliance resource and service delivery.
- We have improved the timeliness of enforcement decisions and follow up of compliance breaches. The volume of lower level enforcement responses (Advice/Guidance and Warning letters) is increasing. These are used as a proportionate response, seeking to bring offenders back into compliance. We have had a number of successful prosecutions for more serious situations this year including for illegal fishing, slurry pollution, illegal felling, cockle poaching, unlawful waste operations and other waste tipping offences. We have used our powers under Proceeds of Crime resulting in £61,000 confiscation for the ringleader of a poaching operation and £90,000 confiscation from a former waste company director. Campaigns for waste carriers, offroad biking, flytipping and illegal modification of watercourses have been used.

Topic owner: Nadia De Longhi

Business Plan dashboard measure/s for this topic:

- Permits and licences issued within statutory timescales
- Category 1 and category 2 compliance breaches are subjected to further assessment
- Decision on an appropriate enforcement response within 3 months

Measure: Permits and licences issued within statutory timescales

This measure reflects permits and licences issued within [statutory timescales \(which vary by permit\)](#), and additionally includes an additional progress update in Q3 on completion of specific permit reviews (for energy from waste installations) and new authorisations applications (in relation to water resources).

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final milestone for this measure is 90% of permits and licences issued within statutory time period.**
- We successfully issued 87% of permits within statutory timescales during Q4. Overall, for 2022/23 we have successfully issued 86% of permits within statutory timescales and are **Amber** at year end.
- The waste regime has implemented a new approach at the duly-making stage to help identify poor quality or deficient applications earlier, which will result in them being returned to the applicant. The aim is to improve application quality, thereby reducing the delays from information requests during determination enabling us to expedite the permit decision.
- Our permitting service has experienced difficulties recruiting suitable technical staff to vacancies though 2022/23 which has affected performance. Water Quality work queue remains under pressure and options are being progressed such as prioritising certain applications, to provide additional resources in the team as well as recruiting to vacancies.
- We have experienced an increase in applications, possibly as customers are applying ahead of planned application price increases originally due to be implemented 01 April 2023.

What we are doing next:

- We will continue to aim to achieve 90% as a service level for our permitting service.
- We are scoping options for a permit reform programme in addition to continual improvement of the service.
- We are preparing to implement the changes brought about through the Strategic Review of Charging.
- We are developing recruitment related products to support a trial, in conjunction with Recruitment Services, aimed at entry level Grade 4 & 5 permitting officer posts to increase interest, awareness and reduce the duration of vacancies.

Measure owner: Nadia De Longhi

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

[To return to start of report - see [Business Plan Performance Dashboard](#) - pages 1 and 2]

Measure: Category 1 and category 2 compliance breaches are subjected to further assessment

This measure reflects the number of category 1 and category 2 compliance breaches and provides assurance that they have been subjected to follow up compliance effort in the subsequent 6 months. Poor performance at permitted sites has the potential for a wide range of impacts. This measure also reflects additional updates each quarter, including in relation to service standards, compliance performance, water company performance and storm overflows action.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final milestone for this measure is 95% (and report on milestones from Regulatory Action Plan within Storm Overflow Roadmap)**
- We have completed this milestone activity. This measure means that in Q4, we are tracking follow up compliance effort for breaches which we identified between July 2022 and September 2022. We recorded 22 breaches all of which received follow up within 6 months through a range of interventions.
- This measure is green for Q4 as we carried out follow up compliance effort for **100%** of the Cat 1 and 2 breaches identified (24).
- This measure is **Green** at year end.

What we are doing next:

- We will continue to prioritise follow up compliance effort where we have identified Category 1 and 2 breaches to ensure we bring operators back into compliance.

Measure owner: Martin Cox

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Red	Amber	Green	Green

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

To return to start of report - see [Business Plan Performance Dashboard](#) - pages 1 and 2]

Measure: Decision on an appropriate enforcement response within 3 months

This measure reflects decisions on appropriate enforcement response in relation to environmental crime being made within three months. This measure also reflects additional updates each quarter, including in relation to enforcement priorities and annual regulatory and waste crime reporting

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final milestone for this measure is 95% of decisions in relation to environmental crime being made within three months (and complete tackling waste crime annual report)**.
- We have met the 95% milestone activity and the tackling waste crime (TWC) annual report has been sent to WG. Over the last year, we have maintained processes to ensure enforcement decisions are taken in a timely way.
- This measure is **Green** at year end.

What we are doing next:

- We will continue to make decisions and take enforcement action swiftly.
- We are collating evidence to inform the Annual Regulation Report 2022, scheduled for publication later in 2023.
- We are collating the enforcement narrative and planning for a quarterly summary of enforcement activity to share with our Board and the Minister.

Measure owner: Nadia De Longhi

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Green	Green	Green

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

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Topic: Responding to the climate and nature emergencies - incident management and response

Topic summary progress:

- **Preparedness:**
 - The resilience of our incident response roles (rotas and cascades) is continuing to improve following the contractual consultation work last year, with more staff beginning to join these roles following the completion of their training. The implementation of this work will continue over the next two years through the Resilient Response to Incidents project, with priority being given to the rotas addressing our highest risks. As part of this project, we are improving our procedures for training staff to carry out incident response roles, including procuring external training provision, where appropriate.
 - In this quarter, we have also:
 - Put in place a new framework contract to provide a consistent air quality incident monitoring response
 - Updated a range of internal guidance, including our incident categorisation and using our updated incident recording system.
- **Response:** An average of 628 incidents were reported to us each month of Q4, which we responded to in line with our policies and procedures. We have also undertaken work to plan for and respond to disruptions, with a focus on disruptions to staff levels and energy supply as well as the impacts of wider public sector industrial action. As well as managing current risks, this work contributes to the longer-term development of our business continuity planning.

Topic owner: Lyndsey Rawlinson

Business Plan dashboard measure/s for this topic:

- Response to incidents initially categorised as 'High' within 4 hours

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Measure: Response to incidents initially categorised as ‘High’ within 4 hours

For incidents we initially 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. Responses may include physical attendance at the site, but also includes other activities, such as contacting professional partners.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final target for this measure is responding to 95% of these incidents within four hours**, with this being calculated for incidents with accurate data only (i.e., not missing or negative times).
- We have achieved our target with 96% in Q4. Over the last year we have achieved an average percentage of 97%. In relation to data quality, 31 out of the 1,389 incidents initially categorised as High-level throughout 2022/23 have missing response details. We are addressing these with specific officers (as outlined below). A further 27 records have a negative response time, i.e., the response time was recorded as being before the notification time in error.
- This measure is **Green** at year end. This is a significant improvement on previous years, and we recognise the hard work that has been put in across the business to achieve this.

What we are doing next?

- We will continue to work on system improvements, officer training and monitoring to ensure that the information underlying this measure is recorded accurately and in a timely manner.
- This measure is likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24. However, we will be reviewing the service performance measures next year to ensure they allow us to adequately assess our progress in delivering on NRW’s new Well-being Objectives. This review may lead to changes in performance reporting from 2024/25.

Measure owner: Lyndsey Rawlinson

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Green	Green	Green

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

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Priority: Using our expertise, alongside that of others, with evidence from SoNaRR2020, to support innovative, integrated decision making to tackle the climate emergency and nature emergency

Our business as usual activity here involves working with national stakeholders to gather, share, promote and update evidence on the state of natural resources in Wales, and using evidence based [Area Statements](#) to inform our priorities, projects and engagement with stakeholders in our seven places, particularly the Public Services Boards as they prepare their well-being assessments and plans. All our work is rooted in good evidence and using and sharing it with partners and communities to advocate for and deliver Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR).

Our [Business Plan](#) sets out the following topics in relation to this priority:

- [Improving and presenting evidence about the natural environment](#)
- [Providing advice and guidance](#)
- [Work with partners and communities using area statements](#)

The following pages reflect recent progress for topics with measures in the Business Plan dashboard, along with the latest performance position in relation to the Business Plan dashboard measure/s for each.

Topic: Improving and presenting evidence about the natural environment

Topic summary progress:

- Delivered Air Quality Evaluation Workshops to shape the air quality programme ensuring it is outcome focused, setting out evidence needs, stakeholder mapping, barriers and enablers to delivery.
- Working with Dundee University, (appointed by WG under a fellowship for Sustainable Management of Natural Resources) to develop an indicator framework for well-being outcomes linked to State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR).
- Continued with a programme of work to transform the way that we integrate and present evidence spatially to stakeholders in support of SoNaRR, SMNR. Continued to maintain and update content on the Wales Environmental Information Portal and transferred NRW open data publishing to WG's new [Data Map Wales](#) service.

Topic owner: Chris Collins

Business Plan dashboard measure/s for this topic:

- [Complete re-design of our freshwater quality monitoring network](#)

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Measure: Complete re-design of our freshwater quality monitoring network

This measure reflects activity to complete the re-design of our freshwater quality monitoring network and monitoring programme and complete this year's monitoring programme. For this year, the quality of water in our rivers and streams, is a particular focus for us, as is developing our evidence and understanding of nutrient impacts in Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) rivers to inform a strategy for their long term remediation.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final milestone for this measure is to complete the redesign of our freshwater quality monitoring network and monitoring programme (and complete the 2022/23 monitoring programme)**
- We have completed the delivery of the 2022/23 monitoring programme. We have not completed the redesign of the monitoring network because of the delays reported Q2 in recruiting an officer to lead the work. We have now succeeded in recruiting the lead officer. We have reviewed and rescheduled our plan for the re-design of the freshwater water quality monitoring network in the light of the delays. This measure is **Amber** at year end.

What we are doing next:

- We have rescheduled the project plan and are close to finalising our freshwater quality monitoring strategy. Subsequent project milestones will be delivered as follows:
 - complete the redesign of our freshwater quality monitoring network by end of June 2024
 - develop an implementation plan for our new monitoring strategy by end of September 2024
 - begin sampling from the new network in January 2025.
 Now that the lead officer is in post, we have a clearer idea of the scale of the work required and as a result the project milestones have been revised since Q3.
- This measure is likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24 as the project will continue until January 2025 and is critical to providing the evidence to support high priority water quality work under the Well-being Objectives pollution is minimised and nature is recovering.

Measure owner: Chris Collins

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Red	Amber	Amber

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

Topic: Providing advice and guidance

Topic summary progress:

- We have developed action and risk logs to co-ordinate and prioritise the asks made from the Interim Environmental Protection Assessor for Wales (IEPAW).
- We have developed a forward look shared with the Assessor and her secretariat which now forms part of the memorandum of understanding.
- We are working with WGs Retained EU Law group to risk assess proposals from UKG.

Topic owner: Ruth Jenkins

Business Plan dashboard measure/s for this topic:

- Response to environmental governance issues and liaison with Interim Assessor
- Inform development of Welsh Government future land management policy & legislation
- Develop and implement programme to examine a proposed new National Park

[To return to start of report - see [Business Plan Performance Dashboard](#) - pages 1 and 2]

Measure: Response to environmental governance issues and liaison with Interim Assessor

This measure relates to NRW's response to environmental governance issues and liaison with the Interim Environmental Protection Assessor for Wales (IEPAW) and proposed environmental oversight body

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final milestone for this measure is to provide submissions and evidence when required (and respond to relevant submissions including calls for evidence and published reports within 20 working days)**.
- We have completed this milestone activity. We have a fully recruited team. We hold regular meetings with the secretariat to go over newly created action and risk logs. We have updated the Memorandum of Understanding and established a forward look of issues such as poly- and perfluoroalkyl substances, Civil Sanctions and water quality. Briefings have been provided to the Assessor on requested topics such as polychlorinated biphenyls contamination and casework details.
- Over the last year, we have supported two expert forums, submitted responses to four calls for evidence, held meetings with the Assessor. We have established a clear single point of contact and established efficient working practices to support the work of the Assessor and her secretariat.
- This measure is **Green** at year end.

What we are doing next:

- We will now work with WG in their development of a permanent environmental oversight body (EOB) whilst continuing to support the work of the Assessor and her secretariat.
- This measure is likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24 as it is likely that the work to establish a permanent EOB will be undertaken in the next year. New service delivery agreements will be developed for NRW to support the work of a new EOB.

Measure owner: Ruth Jenkins

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Amber	Amber	Green

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

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Measure: Inform development of Welsh Government future land management policy & legislation

This measure reflects provision of NRW advice and guidance to inform the development of WG future land management policy and legislation impacting on more than 90% of land in Wales. This includes activity around a regulatory standard for land in Wales, and development of WG's Sustainable Farming Scheme policy.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- **Our final milestone for this measure is to provide submissions, evidence and advice when required (including supporting WG's development of Sustainable Farming Scheme and supporting legislation in considering options)**
- We have continued to input into the scheme as and when required. Requests from WG have been limited within this quarter. We have continued to engage with the relevant WG teams through their revised governance and new focus on Day 1 readiness.
- We have provided written advice on the elements of the scheme as prepared and have started to assess the risks and opportunities that the Sustainable Farming Scheme might have on NRW's resources, before and after it goes live in April 2025 however, this is an interactive process as development continues and as such will need to be revised as scheme detail and delivery models are developed by WG.
- This measure is **Green** at year end.

What we are doing next:

- We will now prepare for day 1 and continue to manage emerging risks.
- This measure is likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24 as WG continue to develop and NRW prepares to support scheme role out.

Measure owner: Sian Williams

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
N/A	Green	Green	Green

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

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Measure: Develop and implement programme to examine a proposed new National Park

This measure reflects activity to develop and implement a programme to examine a proposed new National Park in North East Wales to cover the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final milestone for this measure is develop and implement a programme to examine a proposed new National Park in North East Wales (and review progress and report to our NRM Business Board and the Protected Areas Committee of our Board)**. This measure is **Green** at year end. We have completed this milestone activity and provided updates to the NRW Board and the Protected Areas Committee.
- During the year we have: Undertaken recruitment of a Programme Team, established a Designated Landscapes Programme Board, reviewed and refreshed the forward programme, put in place progress update meetings with WG, prepared and reviewed an Area of Search and accompanying report (to be discussed at Designated Landscapes Programme Board 17 April), held meetings with Local Authorities affected by the designation process, drafted an initial communications and stakeholder engagement strategy, commenced work to scope how to embed the sustainable management of natural resources from the outset of the designation process focussing on nature recovery and climate adaptation and mitigation. We have initiated the scoping of the All-Wales Mapping of Natural Beauty.

What we are doing next:

- We will now, informed by the area of search, proceed to commission evidence relating to special qualities, recreation opportunities, forces for change and alternative management mechanisms. These to inform identification and preparation of a Candidate Area and subsequently a detailed boundary. We will commission the evidence required to inform the All-Wales Natural Beauty Mapping. Informed by the Stakeholder Communications and Engagement strategy, we will formally commence external engagement in relation to the designation process.
- This measure is likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24 as the Designated Landscapes programme is ongoing to 2025 to confirm (or otherwise) a National Park Designation.

Measure owner: Rhian Jardine

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Green	Green	Green

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status
 [To return to start of report - see [Business Plan Performance Dashboard](#) - pages 1 and 2]

Topic: Work with partners and communities using Area Statements

Topic summary progress:

- We have continued to engage with colleagues across NRW and partners to develop the idea of a National Area Statement. We have been working with staff, Integrated Evidence Group (IEG), WG, Cardiff University, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) etc in scoping what it might cover. We have drawn up a Board paper showing all the powers given to us in the Environment Act Wales which we have currently not used and for which we would need to act nationally. We are taking forward various elements of national work to support AS without having a national statement at this point. We are therefore talking to IEG about our role in assembling the evidence required by law for the existing AS. We are also in conversation with colleagues in WG about the appetite and options for developing a refreshed Natural Resources Policy (NRP) in the near future.
- We are currently undertaking a review of how AS have been received. This will involve surveys targeted at both internal and external stakeholders.

Topic owner: Martyn P. Evans

Business Plan dashboard measure/s for this topic:

- Work to set strategic direction for development and implementation of projects

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Measure: Work to set strategic direction for development and implementation of projects

This measure reflects work with staff and partners to set strategic direction for the development and implementation of projects that address Area Statement and Public Services Boards' (PSBs) priorities and opportunities.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our final milestone for this measure is on use of AS in the Well-being Assessments and Plans of PSBs (and to ensure that all 15 PSB WB Plans are scrutinised and signed off by the NRW Board).
- Due to some PSBs merging during the year, there are now only 13 PSB Well-being Plans.
- 11 of the 13 Well-being Plans (85%) have been approved by the Board. Two PSB Well-being Plans have had agreement from WG to have late submission arrangements and are not in a state of readiness for us to take to the Board for approval until June 23. This measure is **Green** at year end as the delay in approving the final two Plans is outside the control of NRW.
- We have created frameworks and used these to assess the extent to which ASs and SoNaRR have been successful in influencing PSB Well-being planning. We have created and followed a robust governance process for sign-off of Well-being Plans, providing quality assurance and consistency of response across all PSBs.

What we are doing next:

- We will now ensure once we have received Powys and Isle of Anglesey/ Gwynedd Well-being Plans they are scrutinised and signed off by the NRW Board by June 2023. We will write a paper summarising and reflecting on local well-being planning in Wales and present this to the NRW Board in Summer 2023. We will work with WG and the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales to support PSBs as Well-being Plans move into delivery phase. The work we do in partnership (including AS's and PSBs) to bring about delivery of our corporate plan ambitions will continue to be important and feature in our performance reporting.
- This specific measure is not likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24 as this element of our work will be complete by Q1 with all Well-being Plans signed off.

Measure owner: Martyn P. Evans

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Green	N/A	Green

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

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Priority: Improving water quality, through raising public awareness using our regulatory and enforcement powers effectively and driving collaboration with others, to reduce the impacts on biodiversity and human health, including from agricultural and land management practices

For this year, water management – both the quality and quantity of water in our rivers and streams, is a particular focus for us. We face the ongoing challenge of raising the quality of our rivers and streams for people and biodiversity whilst balancing the competing demands on the use and management of land and water. Our business as usual work here includes monitoring and reporting, providing advice and guidance, regulation and enforcement where necessary, and working with water companies and WG, as well as specific projects to tackle the legacy of former metal mine workings and their impacts on watercourses.

Our [Business Plan](#) sets out the following topics in relation to this priority:

- [Water Planning](#)
- [Water management](#)

The following pages reflect recent progress for topics with measures in the Business Plan dashboard, along with the latest performance position in relation to the Business Plan dashboard measure/s for each.

Topic: Water Planning

Topic summary progress:

- The spotlight remains firmly on the issues facing water quality, and on our actions and that of our partners.
- In the last year, we have produced the latest River Basin Management Plans for the Western Wales and the cross border Dee and Severn River Basin Management Plans. Updated every six years, these set the direction for how we will manage, protect and improve our water environment in Wales.
- The Water Resources (Control of Agricultural Pollution) (Wales) Regulations 2021 came into force, which replace the Nitrate Pollution Prevention (Wales) Regulations 2013. At WG's request NRW have undertaken a review of nitrate and phosphate concentrations across Wales' surface and groundwaters to establish a baseline which can be used to monitor and assess the effectiveness of the measures. This work is nearing completion.
- We have also undertaken a NRW's statutory Urban Waste Water Sensitive Area review and will make recommendation to WG. If WG designate waters as Sensitive Areas, a water company would need to provide nutrient treatment for qualifying works (above a certain size).
- NRW continue to work with WG, Ofwat, water companies and the Consumer Council for Water to set out the requirements of the environmental obligations on water companies operating in Wales for inclusion in their Price Review 2024 (PR24) business plan submission to Ofwat in October 2023. NRW invited companies to present their proposed investment plans to the NRW Board in November 2022 and Water Companies have been asked to return to our May Board.
- A Team Wales approach is required to deliver at scale and pace to address the climate and nature emergencies. We know that other sectors, such as agriculture, need to act alongside water companies to achieve the ambitious outcomes we want to see.

Topic owner: Sian Williams

Business Plan dashboard measure/s for this topic:

- [Deliver programmes to review statutory water quality requirements](#)
- [Deliver NRW input to the various Water Company Planning Programmes](#)

[To return to start of report - see [Business Plan Performance Dashboard](#) - pages 1 and 2]

Measure: Deliver programmes to review statutory water quality requirements

This measure reflects activity to deliver programmes to review statutory requirements for water quality, identifying annual or periodic requirements. The measure includes updates on reviews associated with nutrients and urban waste water, and the progress of River Basin Management Plans.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final milestone for this measure is to Finalise Dee and Severn River Basin Management Plans and identify statutory requirements for water quality in 2022/23 (and identify statutory requirements for water quality for delivery in 2023/24)**. We have completed part of this milestone activity. We have finalised the Dee and Severn River Basin Management Plans.
- As regards statutory requirements for water quality in 2022/23, we have completed our internal sign-off of the Urban Waste Water Treatment (UWWT) review in Q4, though it remains for NRW to write to WG with our recommendation. Further work has been completed on the Nutrients Review, and we expect to finalise outputs during Q1 of 2023/24. In relation to identifying statutory requirements for water quality in 2023/24, our focus will be delivery of our Bathing Waters programme.
- This measure is **Amber** at year end, with remaining work on track for completion within Q1 of 2023/24.

What we are doing next:

- We will now complete outputs from the Nutrients Review and make recommendations to WG following our review of Urban Waste Water Sensitive Areas. If WG designate waters as Sensitive Areas, a water company would need to provide nutrient treatment for qualifying works (above a certain size).
- This measure is not likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24, given the timescales for these future statutory plans and reviews.

Measure owner: Sian Williams

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Amber	Amber	Red	Amber

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

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Measure: Deliver NRW input to the various Water Company Planning Programmes

This measure reflects NRW input to Water Company Planning Programmes in 2022/23, including in relation to water resources management, regional plans affecting Wales, PR24 and storm overflows action.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final milestone for this measure is to provide input into Water Company planning programmes (and provide our response to Water company draft water resource management plans and regional plans within or affecting Wales).**
- We have completed this milestone activity. We submitted our representations to the WG or Defra for all water company draft water resources management plans and Water Resources West's draft regional plan that are within or affect Wales within the deadlines set by the companies in Q4. We set out our recommendations for improvements to the final plans due later this year.
- Over the last year, we have advised the water companies on the development of their water resources plans.
- This measure is **Green** at year end.

What we are doing next:

- For the next stage in water resources planning process, we become advisors to the Welsh Government on the water company Statement of Response and will advise on the adequacy of the companies' response to the comments received on the draft plans and whether additional information is still required ahead of the final plans being published, that are due later this year. We will also continue to provide advice to water companies and regulatory alliance for progressing infrastructure development on the Severn Thames Transfer scheme.
- This measure is likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24 as this work area continues to be a priority.

Measure owner: Sian Williams

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Amber	Green	Green

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

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Topic: Water Management

Topic summary progress:

- The metal mines programme has achieved its best ever performance for delivered outputs and expenditure (absolute and relative to budget).
- In March, a site visit was attended by WG, Coal Authority and NRW. Following the visit Andy Fraser from WG wrote;

'The NRW and Coal Authority Programme Managers are clearly experts in their field, have a passion for delivering outcomes and have an excellent grasp of the issues. The significance of the metal mines programme ...in supporting our wider objectives for improving river quality is absolutely clear to us.'

Topic owner: Sian Williams

Business Plan dashboard measure/s for this topic:

- [NRW progress on key deliverables for Special Areas of Conservation \(SAC\) Rivers Project](#)
- [Progress of our work to reduce pollution from metal mines](#)

[To return to start of report - see [Business Plan Performance Dashboard](#) - pages 1 and 2]

Measure: NRW progress on key deliverables for Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) Rivers Project

This measure reflects NRW progress on key deliverables for [Special Areas of Conservation \(SAC\) Rivers Project](#).

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our final milestone for this measure is reduced impact of nutrients especially in SAC rivers (and to contribute to establishment and delivery of Nutrient Management Plans for Special Areas of Conservation rivers).
- We have published planning advice and amended our own permitting guidance to reduce the impact of nutrients in SAC rivers. We have also published nutrient neutrality principles and updated our planning advice. We have supported the Wye Nutrient Management Board (NMB) with the delivery of the Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) along with the Dee NMB producing a Phosphorus Reduction Strategy, both of which are going to be reviewed. The three NMBs in SW Wales have commissioned Afonydd Cymru to produce a Plan template for review by WG and NRW. All the NMBs will await the findings before developing a NMP in order to be consistent across Wales, which is expected in April 2023. All the NMB's have now received funding for this year from WG and will work with WG to secure funding up until March 2025. This funding will be targeted at different priorities in each catchment. Each NMB will produce an outline NMP by September 2023, which is set out in the First Minister's Action Plan and signed up to.
- Over the last year, we have been key in establishing the NMBs in the failing SAC Rivers (as well as the Tywi) and have set up a group for all the Chairs/Officers supporting the Boards to share information and learnings to avoid duplication.
- No NMPs have yet been produced as the timeline in relation to the NMP's delivery has been beyond our control and we've not undertaken a more up to date assessment of the nutrients in the rivers. This measure is **Amber** at year end.

What we are doing next:

- We will continue to collaboratively work with the NMBs to produce a NMP with deliverable actions for the responsible organisations/sectors in the SAC Rivers. NRW will be exploring and publishing a list of mitigation measures to help reduce the impact of nutrients in SAC Catchments. This measure is likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24 as the NMBs develop and produce the NMP with the initial actions reviewed annually.

Measure owner: Rhian Jardine

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Green	Amber	Amber

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

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](#) - Delivering a safe local environment and improvements to local air and water quality, ensuring the sites are safe.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final milestone for this measure is to complete a total of 14 preliminary assessments, 8 outline designs, 5 detailed designs, 1 trial and construction of 15 assets.**
- We have not completed this milestone activity. In Q4, we completed:
 - 6 Outline Designs: 1 at Dylife and 1 at Wemyss
 - 2 Detailed Designs: 1 at Frongoch and 1 at Esgair Mwyn
 - The Dispersed Alkaline Substrate (DAS) Trial at Cwm Rheidol, and
 - Construction of 1 assets: 1 at Frongoch and 1 at Pandora
- Over the last year we have completed:
 - All 14 preliminary assessments
 - 6 of 8 Outline Designs
 - 4 of 5 Detailed Designs
 - 1 of 1 Trial, and
 - Construction of 15 assets
- A total of 40 (93%) of the 43 outputs forecast at the beginning of the year. This measure is **Amber** year at year end.

What we are doing next:

- We will now finalise the plan for continuing and starting projects in 2023/24.
- This measure is likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24 as the programme will continue under the leadership of the new Head of Strategic Projects.

Measure owner: Sian Williams

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Amber	Amber	Amber

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

[To return to start of report - see [Business Plan Performance Dashboard](#) - pages 1 and 2]

Priority: Involving a diverse range of stakeholders in our work to help drive a Just and Green Recovery following the pandemic

The unique benefits of nature for people's physical health and mental well-being and the role it could play in a just recovery came into sharp focus during the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition to our business as usual activity in this area, we will work closely with Welsh Government, our partners and local communities to promote learning and responsible recreation in the outdoors.

We have a leading role to play in this in collaboration with others. Green jobs – enabling employment whilst looking after the natural environment, as well as driving opportunities to use local green spaces and reconnect with the natural environment - will advantage not only societal well-being, but also nature itself and SMNR.

Our [Business Plan](#) sets out the following topics in relation to this priority:

- [Diversity and Inclusion](#)
- [Creating a shared vision for the natural environment to 2050 - Nature and Us](#)

The following pages reflect recent progress for topics with measures in the Business Plan dashboard, along with the latest performance position in relation to the Business Plan dashboard measure/s for each.

Topic: Diversity and Inclusion

Topic summary progress:

- We delivered refresher Equality Impact Assessment training for 15 members of staff.
- The Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report for 2022/23 was approved by NRW Board in March 2023.
- In March, the Gender Pay Gap was approved by NRW Board and published on the .Gov website.
- We celebrated 20 events on our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion calendar and Yammer pages, celebrating LGBT+ History month in February.
- As part of our Neurodiversity week 13-19 March, we joined Neurodiversity in Business who support organisations in building better workplaces for Neurodivergent employees.

Topic owner: Sarah Stacey

Business Plan dashboard measure/s for this topic:

- [Deliver against agreed actions for Year 1 of 'All Together' \(Diversity and Inclusion Strategy\)](#)
- [Ongoing development and delivery of combined training, resource and projects](#)

[To return to start of report - see [Business Plan Performance Dashboard](#) - pages 1 and 2]

Measure: Deliver against agreed actions for Year 1 of 'All Together' (Diversity and Inclusion Strategy)

This measure reflects delivery against the first year of ['All Together'- NRW's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy'](#).

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our final milestone for this measure is to deliver the first year of the 'All Together' strategy (with 100% of year 1 planned actions initiated).
- We have completed this milestone activity. We have 100% of year 1 planned actions initiated.
- Over the last year, we have progressed the delivery of the action plan to support the All Together Strategy (and re-prioritised delivery of some actions identified). To date, we have started to progress 26 of the 36 actions identified in the Action Plan.
- This measure is **Green** at year end.

What we are doing next:

- We will now continue with progressing the action plan in initiating more actions over the next year.
- Implement a series of inclusive awareness sessions for all staff.
- Campaigns to increase awareness and work to remove any barriers, to colleagues self-declaring.
- Review our recruitment process to ensure it is inclusive to all.
- Develop an Equality Impact Assessment Screening Tool.
- This measure is not likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24 as we will be concentrating on initiating and completing actions identified for the Diversity and Inclusion Team more than the plan as a whole.

Measure owner: Sarah Stacey

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Green	Green	Green

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status
 [To return to start of report - see [Business Plan Performance Dashboard](#) - pages 1 and 2]

Measure: Ongoing development and delivery of combined training, resource and projects

This measure reflects the ongoing development and delivery of NRW's combined health and educator training, resource and communication projects, including the delivery of Wales Outdoor Learning Week.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final milestone for this measure is to complete a full programme of training, resources and communication projects, engaging and influencing a minimum of 500 individuals and organisations throughout the year.**
- We have completed this milestone activity. We have delivered 37 training courses to educators and trainee GP's, 18 face-to-face and 19 on-line, reaching a total of 1,022 individuals. We delivered Wales Outdoor Learning Week 2022 and Acorn Antics which engaged 25 settings across Wales.
- Over the last year, we have published five new webpages containing over 50 new resources, we issued 12 newsletters seeing subscribers' numbers double, we published 7 blogs, developed a new termly email to all education settings and responded to 14 consultations.
- This measure is **Green** at year end.

What we are doing next:

- We will now continue to develop our ways of working focusing on the new Corporate Plan and in particular the 14-16 Curriculum Review, Wales Social Prescribing Framework and partnership work, continuing to ensure the nature and climate emergencies are addressed and understood within the education and health sectors.
- We will continue to deliver a full programme of training, resources, and communication projects throughout the year, learning lessons from 2022/23 delivery and improving reach and engagement where possible.
- This measure is very likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24 linking directly to the three Corporate Plan objectives and the steps to take around connection to the natural environment.

Measure owner: Ruth Jenkins

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Green	Green	Green

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

[To return to start of report - see [Business Plan Performance Dashboard](#) - pages 1 and 2]

Topic: Creating a shared vision for the natural environment to 2050 - Nature and Us

Topic summary progress:

- We have delivered NRW's first citizens' assembly to agree the Nature and Us vision for the natural environment. It was held during February and March 2023 over 4 sessions – two online and 2 in-person events for participants in North and South Wales. Participants were presented with Nature and Us findings and wider evidence on the climate and nature emergencies within the Welsh context. There was time for deliberation and reflection and an opportunity to bring in everyone's own personal experience. The facilitating organisation is now analysing all the discussions and recommendations to create a vision statement and report by end of May 2023.
- Phase 2 findings and audio works capturing the conversations have been published on our website www.natureandus.wales. We have been working with Ways of Working and 9 individual artists to create further artistic interpretations of the themes coming out of the Nature and Us conversation to date.
- We have held a workshop with the Nature and Us Programme Board to understand their ambition for Nature and Us in the longer term, to help inform the programme evaluation and shape the next steps ahead of the vision launch and implementation (phase 3).

Topic owner: Sarah Williams

Business Plan dashboard measure/s for this topic:

- [Progress of Nature and Us / Natur a Ni programme](#)

[To return to start of report - see [Business Plan Performance Dashboard](#) - pages 1 and 2]

Measure: Progress of Nature and Us / Natur a Ni programme

This measure reflects activity on the [Nature and Us](#) / [Natur a Ni](#) programme relating to preparing a shared vision for the natural environment in Wales to 2050.

Latest position (to end of March 2023):

- Our **final milestone for this measure is to prepare a shared vision for the natural environment in Wales to 2050 (and prepare a shared vision and programme evaluation)**
- We have not completed this milestone activity. We have completed all engagement activities for the vision development including a citizens' assembly. Analysis of the assembly recommendations and findings is underway to agree a draft vision by end April and final vision by end May. We are planning for the publication of the vision with a suite of supporting products. We are also preparing the programme evaluation.
- Over the last year, we have held a national conversation including a large-scale, social media campaign and digital consultation, local roadshows and focus groups with minority groups across Wales and NRW's first citizens' assembly.
- This measure is **Amber** at year end – Programme Executive agreed a shift in timescale to ensure appropriate co-design of the citizens assembly and internal engagement with Programme Board before going out for evaluation. There are no other resource or process constraints.

What we are doing next:

- We will move to Green in Q1 of 2023/24 as we finalise the vision using the findings from the assembly, with publication during Wales Nature Week, end of July 2023. We will procure external expertise to undertake an independent programme evaluation. A discussion is scheduled for May 2023 to determine the long-term ambition.
- This measure is likely to continue to form part of our Business Plan dashboard reporting for 2023/24 as part of the integration of the Nature and Us vision into the implementation of the new Corporate Plan.

Measure owner: Sarah Williams

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Year end
Green	Green	Amber	Amber

See [here](#) for key used for green, amber or red status

[To return to start of report - see [Business Plan Performance Dashboard](#) - pages 1 and 2]

Key: Green, amber or red ratings

The detail of how the green, amber or red status is determined for each measure in our Business Plan dashboard is shown below. We only depart from this where necessary, for the specific measure being considered (e.g. using specific 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 through the year, we reported both a current position to that quarter's end, and an expected year end position. At the end of each financial year, we also report the year end performance position within our Annual Report and Accounts, with that final reported position for each measure reflected as green, amber or red. In that report, **Green reflects achieved target or milestone**, **Amber reflects close to target or milestone**, and **Red reflects missed target or milestone**.

Some measures have no pre-set green, amber or red categorisation, when the nature of a measure means a pre-set approach would not make sense. This is most often the case for new/emerging work areas. The status for these measures is therefore based on a common-sense reflection approach – i.e. the fair reflection of the position at that time.

Responding to the climate emergency and the nature emergency...

Page	Measure	Type	Red is...	Amber is...	Green is...
6	Support delivery of recommendations and actions from Renewable Energy deep dive	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete
7	Develop a low emission fleet and deliver a low emission and climate adapted built estate	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete
9	Implement Flood Review recommendations / actions	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be	Activity reflected is effectively complete

				completed a month later than planned)	
10	Maintain flood risk assets in high risk locations at target condition	Numeric target	Figure / target not achieved.	Within 30% of figure / target	98% (with no integer rounding)
11	Properties with reduced level of risk or sustained protection through capital work	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete
12	Produce Flood Risk Management Plans	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete
14	Priority actions undertaken on protected sites across Wales to improve condition of features	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete
15	Delivering targeted action for declining species or those on the edge of extinction	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete
17	Management of programmes to address and restore habitats across Wales	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete

18	Action undertaken to restore Welsh peatlands including degraded NRW Estate peatland	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete
20	Develop the biodiversity and cultural value of the NNRs in our direct care	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete
21	UKWAS progress	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete
22	Area of new woodland created on the NRW Estate	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete
23	Timber volume offered to market	Numeric target	Figure / target not achieved.	Within 30% of figure / target	85% (with integer rounding, i.e. $\geq 84.5\%$ would be green)
25	Deliver actions in the Wales Marine Protected Area (MPA) Network Management Action Plan	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete

27	Permits and licences issued within statutory timescales	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete
28	Category 1 and category 2 compliance breaches are subjected to further assessment	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete
29	Decision on an appropriate enforcement response within 3 months	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete
31	Response to incidents initially categorised as 'High' within 4 hours	Numeric target	Figure / target not achieved.	Within 30% of figure / target	95% (with integer rounding, i.e. $\geq 94.5\%$ would be green)

Using our expertise, alongside that of others...

Page	Measure	Type	Red is...	Amber is...	Green is...
34	Complete re-design of our freshwater quality monitoring network...	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete
36	Response to environmental governance issues	Text update	No pre-set Red / Amber / Green rating approach in place, i.e. common-sense	No pre-set Red / Amber / Green rating approach in place, i.e. common-sense	No pre-set Red / Amber / Green rating approach in place, i.e. common-sense

	and liaison with Interim Assessor		approach to red rating applies, focused on fair reflection of position	approach to amber rating applies, focused on fair reflection of position	approach to green rating applies, focused on fair reflection of position
37	Inform development of Welsh Government future land management policy & legislation	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
38	Develop and implement programme to examine a proposed new National Park	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete
40	Work to set strategic direction for development and implementation of projects	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete

Improve water quality through raising awareness...

Page	Measure	Type	Red is...	Amber is...	Green is...
43	Deliver programmes to review statutory water quality requirements	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete
44	Deliver NRW input to the various Water Company Planning Programmes	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete
46	NRW progress on key deliverables for Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) Rivers Project	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete
47	Progress of our work to reduce pollution from metal mines	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete

Involving a diverse range of stakeholders...

Page	Measure	Type	Red is...	Amber is...	Green is...
50	Deliver against agreed actions for Year 1 of 'All Together' (Diversity	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete

	and Inclusion Strategy)				
51	Ongoing development and delivery of combined training, resource and projects	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete
53	Progress of Nature and Us / Natur a Ni programme	Milestone	Activity reflected is not near completion	Activity reflected is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected is effectively complete

Developing NRW into an excellent organisation...

See 'Internal performance report' (*next page*)

Annex 2 - Internal Performance Report 2022/23

Priority: Developing NRW into an excellent organisation, with a workforce that drives a strong performance culture and delivers value for money and social and environmental value for the people of Wales

We want to be the best organisation we can be for our customers, for nature and for the people of Wales. To do this, we aim to continue to improve the services we provide, innovating and using digital approaches, whilst building on changes in working practices as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Our Business as Usual work here includes all the services we provide to enable work to take place on the ground and to develop our evidence base – looking after our staff; stakeholders and customers; training and developing our staff to help them reach their full potential; paying our bills on time and buying in goods and services with sustainability in mind; developing commercial opportunities sustainably including harvesting timber; and making sure we have robust governance in place so that we are open, fair and act with propriety.

Our [Business Plan](#) sets out the following topics in relation to this priority:

- Our Governance
- Our ICT
- Our finances and our commercial opportunities
- Our People
- Our Stakeholders and Customers

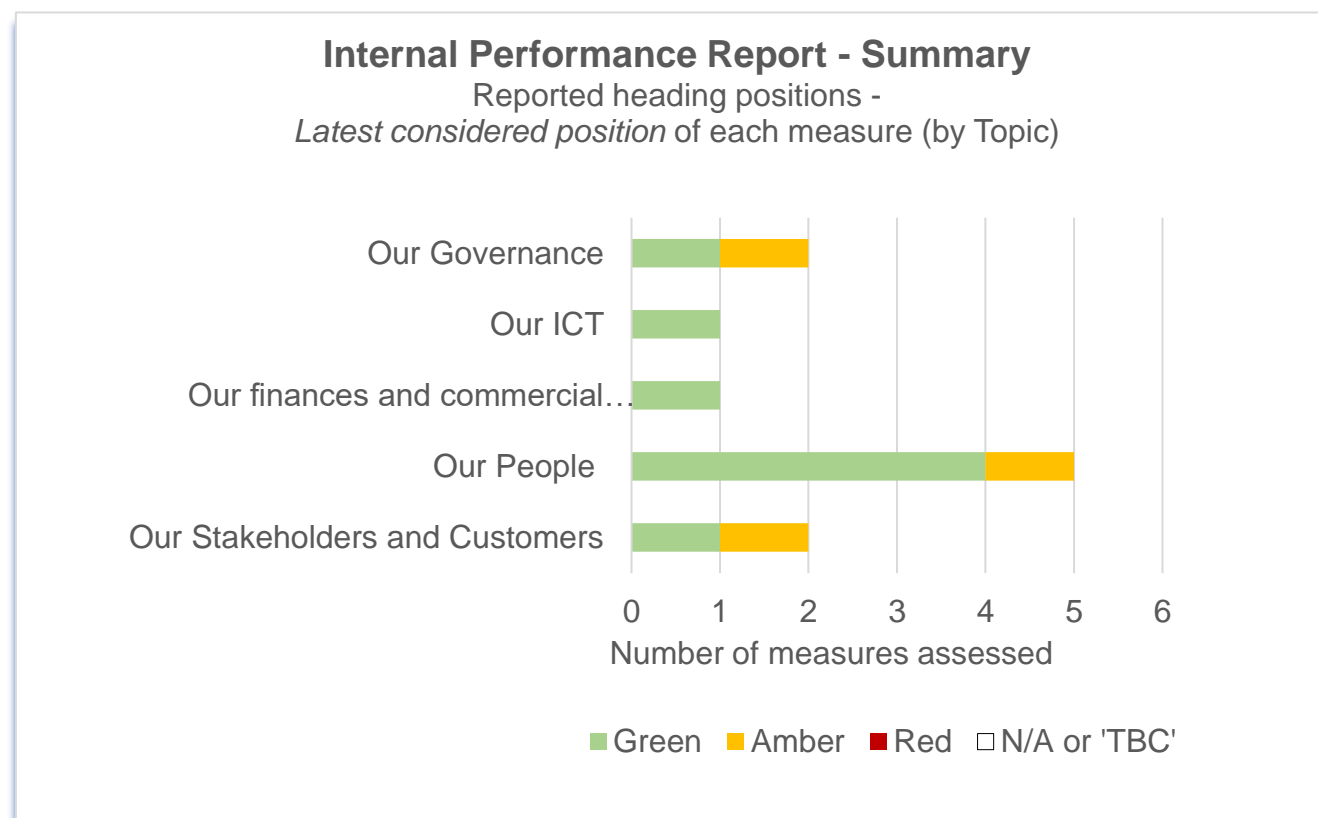
The following pages show recent progress for each of those topics, through reflecting a quarter end performance snapshot in relation to a number of key measures which our Leadership Team consider each month relating to the 'health' of our organisation.

Summary

The performance position* (at the end of the year, i. e. March 2023) for the measures covered by the topics listed is:

- eight green
- three amber
- none red

(see next page for detail)



*Overall/performance key: The overall/performance status for each measure reflects a green, amber or red state, i.e.:
Green - achieved target or milestone; Amber - close to target or milestone; Red - missed target or milestone.

Measures to note

Updates below reflect all measures red or amber at the end of the year.

Our Governance:

- In relation to non-compliance (**enforcement response** within NRW) our response is Amber at the end of March, with four enforcement notices issued to NRW this year. Our ambition for Green is to have zero. Any response is reviewed internally and by our external auditors (e.g. for ISO14001 and UKWAS).

Our Stakeholders and Customers:

- **Access to Information requests** ('ATIs') responded to within 20 days was Amber at the end of March with four responses outside of this timescale over the last quarter, and 92% of all such ATIs or EIR requests completed within 20 days during the year. At the start of the reporting year we received a high number of complex 'Subject Access Requests' (SAR), which were a significant burden on resources and impacted the capacity of the team to respond to FOI/EIR requests. However, the team attended formal SAR/FOI/EIR training, tightened up processes and raised organisational awareness.

Our People:

- As anticipated in our last report, **absence** is Amber for the end of March, at 4.4% (3.5% or below is considered green for this). This reflected an improvement from the position reported at the end of December (Red, at 5.1%). Absence in relation to mental health remains the main reason for absence. An action plan has been established in relation to sickness absence. Changes are being made to systems to help identify reasons for sickness, in particular as a result of stress, and provide more targeted support where appropriate.

**Overall/performance key:* The overall/performance status for each measure reflects a green, amber or red state, i.e.:
Green - achieved target or milestone; Amber - close to target or milestone; Red - missed target or milestone.

Remaining measures

The remaining measures, i.e. those not already highlighted as 'Measures to note' on the previous page, are reflected below.

Our Stakeholders and Customers:

- **Complaints** responded to within 20 days remained Green at the end of March, with no response made outside of this timescale over the last quarter, and 96% of all stage 1 complaints completed within 20 days during the year.

Our finances and commercial opportunities:

- **Payments performance** to our suppliers is Green at the end of March (at 99%), up from 95% for the end of Q3 report (94.5% or higher is considered green for this). Over 3,000 invoices were processed in March, more than 50% up on the usual monthly volume. Yearly average of paying invoices increased to 94.1% this year.

Our Governance:

- **Declarations of Interest** (where people working for us declare when their official and/or private interests may be perceived to conflict with NRW's work) is Green at 96% for the latest report, up from 95% (Green), with the relevant declaration in place for the vast majority of staff (at least 90% is considered green).

Our ICT

- **Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)** reported incidents remains Green with no such investigations ongoing at the end of March, and no reportable data breaches during 2022/23.

Our People:

- **Health & Safety Near Miss reporting** improved to Green to the end of March (Red in last report), with an increase in the number of near misses reported compared with the previous year. Overall, for 2022/23 there have been 250 near miss reports (up from 220 for 2021/22).
- **Health and Safety Active Monitoring** (i.e. regular inspection and checking to ensure that wellbeing, health and safety standards are being implemented) improved to Green at the end of March (Red in the last report). It was previously thought this would remain red for year end; Overall, we have seen a reduction in the reported active monitoring figures from 2021/22 to 2022/23 (to 843 down from 1,104).
- **Sgwrs** (priorities and development agreement) is now Green at the end of March, at 93% for the last report (Green is 90% or higher), and up again from the end of the previous quarter's report (91%).

- **'Mandatory E-Learning'** (online training items all NRW staff are required to complete) remains Green at the end of March at 97% (at least 89.5% is considered green).

**Overall/performance key:* The overall/performance status for each measure reflects a green, amber or red state, i.e.:

Green - achieved target or milestone; Amber - close to target or milestone; Red - missed target or milestone.

NRW Board Paper

Date of meeting:	19 th July 2023
Title of Paper:	Welsh Language Annual Report 2022 - 2023
Paper Reference:	23-07-B11
Paper sponsored by:	Prys Davies, Executive Director of Corporate Strategy and Development
Paper prepared by:	Lyn Williams, Specialist Advisor Welsh Language
Paper presented by:	Prys Davies, Executive Director of Corporate Strategy and Development and Sarah Stacey, Head of Organisational Development
Purpose of the paper	Producing a Welsh Language Annual Report on how we have implemented our policy each reporting year is a requirement of our Welsh Language Standards.
Summary	NRW Board is asked to approve the Welsh Language Annual Report for 2022-23 in line with the requirements of our Standards.

Background

1. The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 established a legal framework to impose Welsh Language Standards on some public organisations, and NRW has a duty to comply. Our Welsh Language Standards became operational for our organisation on 25 January 2017.
2. Our work in implementing our Standards will support our ability to achieve our three Well-being objectives by:
 - building the capability and capacity of the Welsh workforce to support climate action through working with others to advocate for green skills and jobs.
 - supporting Welsh Government (WG) Cymraeg 2050 by committing in our Corporate Plan to creating opportunities and building confidence in the use of Welsh across

the organisation, supporting engagement in Welsh between colleagues as well as with partners and customers.

- share a pride in supporting the Welsh language, recognising how it defines us as people and as a nation, and connects us with our natural resources and our communities.

3. NRW Board is asked to approve our Welsh Language Annual Report for 2022-23, which we have a duty to produce and publish under our Welsh Language Standards policy, and to update the Board on the work which has taken place over the last financial year to implement our policy and improve our Welsh language services.

Assessment

Welsh Language Annual Report 2022-2023 (Annex 1)

4. Four complaints were received from members of the public relating to the Welsh language over the year; this is a decrease from ten the previous year. Three complaints have come directly to us and one via the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office. We dealt directly with the complainants to resolve matters raised with us.
5. The Welsh Language Commissioner has decided to investigate non-compliance with our standards in relation to the one complaint they received. This matter is ongoing, and we are responding to the Commissioner's request for information as per their terms of reference in dealing with investigations. The Team concerned have received a presentation to remind them of the requirements of our Standards, and two Welsh Language Awareness sessions have been run for staff. Over the coming year we will continue to raise awareness of the Standards to help staff in gaining a better understanding of our duties. More information on the complaints received can be found on page 19 of the report.
6. 173 of our staff have been developing their skills on a weekly basis; this is an increase of 35 from last year. Most of our learners this year are based in Ceredigion and Powys 27% (46), with 17% (29) are or near being fluent Welsh speakers. More information on our training programme can be found in Appendix 2 of the report.
7. 24.3% (571) of our staff are fluent Welsh speakers which has been steadily increasing over the last few years through our recruitment procedures and staff who are developing their language skills through our training programme. Most of our teams have at least one Welsh speaker. 93.7% (2199) of our staff can show linguistic courtesy when meeting and greeting others. More information can be found on the language skills of our staff in Appendix 4 of the report.
8. Raising Awareness:
Over the last year Managers and the Grŵp Pencampwyr (Champions Group) have been asked to raise awareness of our Standards by ensuring staff are aware of our guidance in relation to:
 - Ensure staff are aware of our guidance in relation to corresponding with others, our telephone guidance and in setting up bilingual answerphone and out of office messages.
 - Recruitment guidance for managers.

- Being proactive in providing a language choice to customers and partners and recording that choice for future use.
- Promoting our Welsh Language Training programme and internal ICT systems available for staff to use in Welsh.
- The need to assess and record Welsh language skills in MyNRW.
- Ensuring all permanent and temporary signage is bilingual.
- Considering translation requirements of documents from beginning, factoring time required in to work timeline.
- Promote Welsh language culture days.
- Two new Yammer page groups developed – Grŵp Pencampwyr and Siop Siarad Cymraeg.

9. Improving our Welsh language services:

- The Environment Agency administer the fishing licence purchase service on our behalf, and over the last few years we have been working with them to develop the Welsh language capability of the service on the .Gov website. With funding and translation support from NRW the pages were updated, and the service became live on Gov.uk website in November 2022 allowing the public to purchase their licence in Welsh.
- As part of the recently refreshed brand and Microsoft Templates updates, Welsh language considerations have been added to the templates. As part of this work our corporate bilingual email signature template is now embedded into Outlook for staff to use. This will act as a reminder to all colleagues of the need to consider the Welsh language as part of their day-to-day work.
- A new Procurement Guidance has been drafted to help staff and third parties in understanding the considerations that need to be given to the Welsh language as part of the process. This guidance will help in considering the needs of Welsh speakers when contracting out services and goods.
- The new Manager's Toolkit page on our intranet to help Managers in understanding the tasks they need to complete as a manager includes guidance on our Standards. This will help mainstream the Welsh language more into the day-to-day ways of working, helping managers understand the requirement and their team's compliance and reducing complaints received from our customers.

10. Key Highlights for the 2021/22 Report:

- The work on the Corporate Plan included extensive consultation sessions with staff on the Welsh version of the Plan, to ensure that the vision, values and well-being objectives were expressed in a true and original Welsh voice with input from our Welsh speaking staff.
- The Plan includes our commitment in creating opportunities in the use of Welsh across the organisation supporting the use internally as well as with partners and customers. This pride and confidence in using Welsh in our work has been at the forefront of our minds as the Corporate Plan evolved, ensuring our vision, mission and values were written in a way that resonate in the Welsh and English languages.
- Our Translation Team takes advantage of opportunities to create original Welsh text rather than a translation at the end of processes. The team write as a pair or trio when creating digital content. Our Corporate Plan was written in this way, ensuring the Welsh language was at the core of the process. This included holding Welsh consultation sessions with staff on the Plan, to ensure that the vision, mission and

values were expressed in a true and original Welsh voice with input from our Welsh speaking colleagues to help shape our values from a Welsh speakers perspective.

- Evidence shows that Welsh speakers choose not to use Welsh language services when contacting public organisations and a project was undertaken by the North Wales Public Service Board Welsh Language sub-group to try and establish what the barriers are. Our reception area at Coed y Brenin participated in this project and learnings from observing ten reception areas as part of this exercise shows: -
 - We need to make sure that the environment is bilingual and welcoming
 - Ensure everything visual e.g., posters and signs are bilingual
 - Auditory environment heavily influences people's language choiceGuidance has been drafted with useful hints, tips and phrases for staff working in reception areas to proactively prompt customers to use the Welsh language.
- Our Education and Health Team received commendation from Teachers for the great work they are doing in delivering training through the medium of Welsh to such a high standard. All resources following training is provided to Teachers in Welsh.
- We won the Work Welsh Employer of the Year for 2022 for the support we provide to our staff members to enable them to commit to learning Welsh. Coleg Gwent also awarded our Advanced Welsh course with Workplace Class of the Year for 2022 due to their continuous contribution, enthusiasm, and dedication to learning Welsh, particularly during lockdown and with ever changing work commitments and emergencies.
- Our Landscape, Planning and Energy Team have worked alongside the Welsh Language Commissioner and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales to develop Operational Guidance Note (OGN) 124 Historic Place Names. We understand this may be the first public body specific guidance relating to historic place names in Wales.

Risks, risk appetite and opportunities

11. Failure to produce a Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report will be breaking our legal duty within our compliance notice.
12. Failure in providing a Welsh language service will result in providing a poor customer service to a proportion of the population of Wales, resulting in complaints to the Welsh Language Commissioner who will conduct investigations into our failure to comply with our legislative requirements.
13. Risks of non-compliance can be found on page 20 of the Annual Report. We are confident the measure we have put in place will address the issues concerned.

Wider implications

14. **Well-being Objectives:** Our work in implementing our Welsh Language Standards will help to achieve NRW's three Well-being Objectives by:
 - building the capability and capacity of the Welsh workforce to support climate action through working with others to advocate for green skills and jobs
 - supporting WG Cymraeg 2050 by committing in our Corporate Plan to creating opportunities and building confidence in the use of Welsh across the organisation,

supporting engagement in Welsh between colleagues as well as with partners and customers.

- share a pride in supporting the Welsh language, recognising how it defines us as people and as a nation, and connects us with our natural resources and our communities.

15. **Finance:** Implementation of the Standards will continue from current budgets; there will be costs in translating the landing pages on the Fishing Licence Purchasing webpages to ensure compliance.
16. **Resource implications:** No resource implications anticipated.
17. **Equality:** An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out for the Welsh Language Standards Policy prior to implementation in 2017. The policy ensures equality between our Welsh and English services to the public in line with the requirements of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.
18. **Data Protection:** There is no need for a Data Protection Impact Assessment to be conducted on the annexes because we are not sharing personal information within them.

Next Steps

19. We have been invited by the Welsh Language Commissioner to work with them on a project to increase the use of Welsh within public organisations.
20. Following a discussion at the People and Customer Committee arrangements are being made to hold a Welsh language awareness session which will include chairing bilingual meetings and basic greetings as part of Board development.
21. Once the Report has been through NRW governance approval process, it will be published on our website and intranet, and promoted on our social media account by the end of September 2023 which is a requirement of our Welsh Language Standards.
22. The Welsh Language Commissioner will use the Report as part of their role as a regulator in monitoring our compliance with the Standards.

Recommendation

23. Whilst there are no recommendations in this paper beyond endorsing the Welsh Language Annual Report in Annex 1, the contents are open to comment.

Index of Annexes

Annex 1 – Welsh Language Annual Report 2022-23

Approval / Consultation process

<p>Approval/consultation process</p> <p>Responsible: Who has developed the paper/process and who has had input?</p>	<p>Lyn Williams, Welsh Language Policy Advisor has drafted the report, information has been gathered from the business on our compliance and implementation of our Welsh Language Standards.</p>
<p>Accountable: Who is accountable for the ultimate approval? Who will be or is being asked to approved?</p>	<p>NRW Board</p>
<p>Consulted: Who has been consulted to date? Where endorsement is required, is this in place? Will further consultation be required?</p>	
<p>Informed: Who has been informed or who needs to be further information about the work?</p>	<p>The report was endorsed by the Executive Team on 23rd May and People and Customer Committee on 7th June.</p>



Welsh Language Annual Report

2022 – 2023

This report is available in both Welsh and English on our website at [Natural Resources Wales Welsh Language Standards](#)

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:

iaithgymraeg@naturalresourceswales.co.uk

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Executive Summary

Croeso to our Welsh Language Annual Report for 2022-2023. This report focuses on how we have implemented our Welsh Language Standards policy and the work we have done to improve our Welsh language services during this reporting period.

On 1 April 2023 we celebrated a decade of serving the people of Wales and launched our Corporate Plan 2023-2030. The work on the Corporate Plan included extensive consultation sessions with staff on the Welsh version of the plan, to ensure that the vision, values and well-being objectives were expressed in a true and original Welsh voice with input from our Welsh speaking staff. The Welsh version of the plan was written using the pair writing translation method, which enables everyone involved to share ideas, ask questions, and improve the content in both languages.

The plan includes our commitment in creating opportunities in the use of Welsh across the organisation supporting the use internally as well as with partners and customers. This pride and confidence in using Welsh in our work has been at the forefront of our minds as the corporate plan evolved, ensuring our vision, mission and values were written in a way that resonate in the Welsh and English languages.

Language is an important part of a person's identity and the Welsh language skills of our workforce play a major part in our ability to communicate effectively with our Welsh speaking customers. Not all staff can speak Welsh but, being able to say a few words in Welsh can go a long way and make a big difference when dealing with customers and partners. 24.3% (571) of our staff are fluent Welsh speakers with numbers steadily increasing over the last few years through our recruitment procedures and staff who are developing their language skills through our training programme. Most of our teams have at least one Welsh speaker. 93.7% (2198) of our staff can show linguistic courtesy when meeting and greeting others.

During the Pandemic the number of staff developing their language skills decreased. We are pleased that over this reporting period, 173 of our staff have been developing their skills weekly, this is an increase of 35 from last year. Most of our learners are based in Ceredigion and Powys 27% (46), with 17% (29) are or near being fluent Welsh speakers. We won the Work Welsh Employer of the Year for 2022 due to the support we provide staff to learn Welsh. Coleg Gwent also awarded our Advanced Welsh course with Workplace Class of the Year due to their commitment and perseverance over several years in continuing to develop their language skills.

In November 2022 we were pleased to announce and promote that fishing licences can now be purchased in Welsh on .Gov website. This service has been developed working in partnership with the Environment Agency who administer the fishing licence purchase service on our behalf. We will continue to work with the Environment Agency over the next year to ensure that all the pages are available in Welsh.

Our website statistics show that over the year there were 53,013 (2.19%) page views on our Welsh pages, this is an increase of 4,994 views from last year. We have a statutory duty to consult and add to the List of Historic Place Names and very pleased to work alongside the Welsh Language Commissioner and the Royal Commission

on the Ancient and Historical monuments of Wales to develop a guidance and training event for our staff.

We still receive complaints and welcome members of the public drawing our attention to matters when they have not received the service in Welsh, they expected too from us. This helps us in understanding the needs of our customers better and where interventions are needed to improve our services for the future.

Introduction

The Welsh Language Standards came into force for NRW on 25th January 2017, under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and regulated by the Welsh Language Commissioner under Welsh Language Standards (No. 2) Regulations 2016.

Aim of the Standards are:

- Provide a better and more consistent Welsh language service to Welsh speakers.
- Make it clear to Welsh speakers' what services they can expect in Welsh.
- Make it clear to public organisations what their duties are in relation to the Welsh language.
- Ensure that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language.

This report demonstrates how we have implemented the standards and the work we have done to improve our Welsh language services during the reporting year 2022/23.

Welsh Language Standards

The standards we are required to comply with are in four categories:

Service Standards - the Welsh language services we provide to the public.

Policy Standards - ensuring that Welsh language forms part of the decision-making process by carrying out Equality Impact Assessments ensuring that the decision has no adverse effect, but positive or increased effects on the opportunities to use the Welsh language.

Operational Standards - promoting and facilitating the Welsh language in our internal administration processes.

Record Keeping Standards - keeping records for compliance with the requirements of the standards in areas such as staff Welsh language skills, training, complaints, and recruitment.

Governance and Monitoring our Standards

Monitoring compliance of Standards is carried out by Welsh Language Policy Advisor, any risks highlighted to our Executive Team for discussion with Managers and explained at Grŵp Pencampwyr meetings.

Grŵp Pencampwyr members will raise any issues of non-compliance with the Welsh Language Policy Advisor and at each meeting.

How we promote, facilitate and oversee compliance with our Standards is published on our website [How we comply with our Standards](#)

Implementing and Improving our Welsh Language Standards

Service Standards

Purchase of Fishing Licences on .Gov

The Environment Agency administer the fishing licence purchase service on our behalf, and over the last few years we have been working with them to develop the Welsh language capability of the service on the .Gov website. With funding and translation support from NRW the pages were updated, and the service became live on Gov.uk website in November 2022 allowing the public to purchase their licence in Welsh. A direct link is provided from our website to this service.

New webpages were created to promote fishing and this new service in readiness for the new 2023 season, encouraging Welsh speakers and learners to apply for their licence in Welsh, along with a press release.

This new service was also promoted on our and The Angling Trust social media accounts under the heading “*Fishing in Wales*”. The service was promoted again at the beginning of the fishing season in March and April, reminding the public of the need to renew their licences which we hope will prompt users to use the service.

Further work is required to ensure the landing pages on .Gov are available in Welsh, which will take place in a subsequent release of the service. Updating the pages will be dependent on Environment Agency engagement with .Gov, their processes, and their timelines. In the meantime, a message will be published on the landing page to inform users that they are able to purchase a Fishing Licence in Welsh. Once this work has been carried out the whole of the Fishing Licence Purchase service will be available in Welsh and compliant with our Standards.

This is a requirement of Standards 48, 51 and 52.

Translation Team

Since March 2022 the team is near full capacity in terms of staff, which has allowed more translation work to be carried out internally. This helps in supporting the organisation with our Welsh language needs and allows considerable collaboration on projects, thereby helping to make the Welsh language an important part of our work.

By working with colleagues across the organisation, the team takes advantage of any opportunities to create original Welsh text rather than simply providing translations at the end of the process. For example, the team worked on a project for new Welsh Coast Path T-shirts, which now have original poetic Welsh lines on them created by a team member rather than a translation.

The team also advises colleagues on possibilities and alternatives to direct translations, and how best to proceed by including the Welsh language as an integral part of projects –

the team always strives to be innovative in doing this. This has resulted in countless bilingual videos and podcasts, and, for example, monolingual Welsh videos with English subtitles rather than producing a video twice.

The team is also keen to take advantage of opportunities for a translator to be involved in the content creation process, and often contribute by writing as a pair or as a trio when creating digital content. Creating content in this way enables everyone involved to share ideas, ask questions, and improve the content in both languages. We also had the opportunity to present this work at one of the Digital Public Service Centre sessions.

Our Corporate Plan was written in a similar way, ensuring the Welsh language was a core part of the preparation of what is an important document for the immediate future of the organisation. The text went back and forth between languages – allowing the languages to influence each other, and for improvements to be made to the text in each language. If a section or passage was particularly successful in Welsh, the English could be amended in a similar way, and vice versa.

The work on the Corporate Plan also included extensive consultation sessions with staff on the Welsh version of the plan, to ensure that the vision and objectives were expressed in a true and original Welsh voice with input from our Welsh speaking staff.

The Translation Team will continue to seek opportunities to work in innovative ways, and to work closely with colleagues across the organisation, to ensure that the Welsh language is at the heart of everything we do as an organisation.

Updating our Bilingual Microsoft Templates

Recently we refreshed our brand, and as part of this work our Microsoft Templates were updated. Welsh language considerations have been added to the templates, this will act as a reminder to all colleagues of the need to consider the Welsh language as part of their day-to-day work.

The templates which include Welsh language considerations are: -

- Letterhead template reminds staff to ask a customer's language preference for both corresponding and telephoning calls and includes the by-line welcoming correspondence in Welsh.
- General document, evidence report, general report and procedure templates remind colleagues to consider translation requirements. A direct link to our Translation Assessment Guidance is provided.
- Agenda template reminds staff of the need to consider translation requirements for public meetings and consider simultaneous translation needs.
- Policy template reminds of the need to translate policies prior to publishing and the need for an Equality Impact Assessment which includes language considerations.

As part of this work, our email signature template is now embedded into outlook email for staff to use which includes the by-line welcoming correspondence in Welsh. Having the by-line embedded in the signature will make it easier for staff to use and be compliant with our Standards.

To help ensure a more consistent approach in colleagues using our most updated templates, our Brand Manager will be issuing guidance, promoting the guidance, and

raising awareness in our brand module as part of the induction process for new colleagues.

The above are requirements of Standards 2, 7, 9, 36, 43, 101-107.

Telephone Guidance

The telephone guidance has been refreshed to reflect the move to using Microsoft Teams Telephones. The guidance includes some Welsh phrases colleagues could use to show linguistic courtesy when using the telephone. This will help in complying with our Standards when answering the telephone, making telephone calls and being proactively in offering a language choice to the caller as well as setting up a bilingual answer phone message as part of our day to day work. The guidance has been promoted on the intranet.

This is a requirement of Standards 8 – 22.

Procurement Guidance – May 2023

A new Procurement Guidance has recently been drafted to help staff in understanding what considerations need to be given to the Welsh language and included as part of the tender process when contracting out services and goods.

The guidance will also help third parties in understanding what services and how we will require them to deliver in Welsh when providing services on our behalf, helping to deliver a service which is compliant with the requirements of our Standards.

This guidance will help in considering the needs of Welsh speakers when contracting out services and goods in line with requirements of our Service Delivery Standards and will be promoted during the next year.

This is a requirement of our Service Delivery Standards 1 – 83.

Website

Our statistics show that over the year there were 53,013 (2.19%) page views on our Welsh pages, this is an increase of 4,994 views from last year. There were 2,363,972 (97.64%) on English pages.

The most accessed page in Welsh was our job vacancy pages with 1,633 page views.

The Digital Services Team continued to work to work closely with partners to develop, share and learn from best practice to design and build services that promote and ease the use of Welsh.

This includes:

- Being an active contributor to the Designing Bilingual Services community, and contributing to [new guidance to support the service standards](#).
- Working with colleagues ICT, Translation and Fisheries in NRW to support the development of the get a fishing licence service on gov.uk in Welsh.

Customer Hub

The Customer Hub deals with all incoming calls for our organisation. During this reporting year the Hub dealt with a total of 18,773 calls, 4.68% (879) of the calls were Welsh

medium calls. The calls handled in Welsh are slightly down by 0.55% (185) from last year as were the total number of incoming calls which were also down by 7.61% (1,547). This decrease could also be due to the increase in people using our website to access our services in Welsh.

Despite a proactive language offer, a number of Welsh speakers still initially choose our English service, but the call will often change to a Welsh language call when it is understood that the call handler is a Welsh speaker. However, because the customer initially selected the English service these calls are registered as English medium calls on our system despite ultimately being dealt with in Welsh.

This is a requirement of Standards 8, 9, 10, 13 and 16.

North West Wales Public Service Board

Evidence in place shows that Welsh speakers choose not to use Welsh language services when contacting public organisations and a project was undertaken by the North Wales Public Service Board Welsh Language sub-group to try and establish what the barriers are. Coed y Brenin was one of the ten reception settings where the interaction between staff and customers was observed as part of this project work.

The findings from the observations and speaking to staff and customers found:

- A language choice was in place, but not always obvious enough or a proactive Welsh/bilingual greeting offered to the customer to encourage the use of Welsh.
- Where an “active offer” was initiated by staff, this made a difference in the language spoken. There is a limited opportunity for staff to make a difference in the language choice of customers – hence the importance of the proactive bilingual greeting being given first by staff.
- Service users needed to hear Welsh spoken to be sure that they could speak to staff in Welsh.
- Regular customers or those who had visited before knew that they could use the Welsh language being familiar with staff.
- Some Welsh learners felt confident to practice their language skills.
- parents wanting to show an example and encourage their children to speak and use Welsh.

Learnings from this exercise: -

- We need to make sure that the environment is bilingual and welcoming.
- Ensure everything visual e.g., posters and signs are bilingual.
- Auditory environment heavily influences people’s language choice.

Guidance have been drafted which will be shared with reception staff which contains top tips, a checklist and examples of words and useful phrases in meeting and greeting customers at reception following this project.

This work will help ensure our compliance with Standards 60, 63 and 64.

Education and Health Training Events

During the year our Education and Health Team ran 36 courses in total.

- 16 face to face, 6 were through the medium of Welsh only.
- 18 bilingual webinars, 6 were through the medium of Welsh only.

- 2 GP training courses (these can be run in Welsh).
- The Team also delivered Welsh language workshops at Welsh Government's 1st ever Wales Youth COP. One Welsh workshop, one bilingual workshop and bilingual representation on the display stand.

Participants on webinars and face to face courses receive bilingual course material with links to both Welsh and English versions of the resources shared.

The concept of 'cynefin' runs through the Curriculum for Wales – every training course, either face to face or online, includes information on how the landscape and geography of Wales has influenced Welsh culture, history, and the economy. Opportunities to promote the Welsh language are grasped e.g., suggesting to educators that they investigate the history of placenames and meaning of Welsh songs that relate to the landscape.

We continue to advise Welsh Government, supporting them to realise the Curriculum for Wales and the role of the Welsh natural environment within that.

We are required to offer any education courses in Welsh, which is a requirement of Standard 80.

More information can be found in **Appendix 1** of this report on the resources the team have produced for educators and teachers, their partnership work with others and national campaigns and events over this reporting period.

Flood Warning and Informing Services

The flood warning service issues Flood Alerts, Flood Warnings and Severe Flood Warnings to the public and professional partners. Messages are sent by phone, SMS or email in Welsh or English, as requested by the recipient. These warning messages are complemented by the following services:

- NRW Website Services - *5 Day Flood Risk for Wales* webpage - where we provide a summary of potential flood risk across Wales for the next 5 days [weblink](#)
- *Flood Warnings & Alerts* webpage - we provide details of all warnings in force along with live flood information [weblink](#)

Each of these services are available in Welsh or English.

Floodline

Floodline is a UK wide service on [0345 988 1188](tel:03459881188) – a local rate call service where callers can listen to live flood information, listen to pre-recorded advice, and speak to a trained call agent to report flooding or register to the flood warning service

In July 2019, we improved the Floodline call plan to make it easier for callers to access our Welsh language service by including a Welsh language call agent service during weekday daytime hours. Outside these hours, or if a Welsh speaking call agent is unavailable, callers are given the option of leaving a message requesting a call back in Welsh, or to be diverted to an English-speaking call agent instead.

Although the proactive offer of a Welsh language service is still in place, Welsh speakers are often put through to English call handlers as the service cannot guarantee a dedicated Welsh speaker to deal with Welsh medium calls. Welsh medium callers can also choose to

terminate the call and receive a call back from a Welsh language agent when one becomes available.

To address this issue a project has been commissioned in NRW D&I to improve this service which will be available 24/7 by diverting Welsh language calls from Floodline to our Incident Communication Centre. This will mean that Welsh speakers calling Floodline would be provided with a seamless Welsh language service via NRW ICC. This would be equal to that of the English language service and NRW would have control over the Welsh language service as well as being able to promote the service more widely here in Wales. The project is currently due for delivery in Autumn 2023.

Providing a Welsh language service on helplines is a requirement of Standards 9 and 10.

NRW Website – Flood Warnings, Alerts and Flood Risk Services

In October 2020, we refreshed our website design to make it easier and quicker to use, ensuring that the design was fully compatible with the Welsh language.

Visitors to our website are asked to choose their preferred language. Compared with the last financial year we have seen an increase in visitors to the Welsh language page for 5 day flood risk, but a decrease in visits to the Welsh language Warnings and Alerts page.

Flood Warning Message Content

A key element of our service is to provide real-time information to help people understand their immediate flood risk. This requires the ability to accurately translate information in Welsh. We are planning to explore options for developing this translation capability so that we can provide richer, more helpful information – noting there is little room for translation error in a potentially life-saving service. On completion of the Floodline improvement we plan to carry out activities to promote our Welsh language offering.

Information on our Flood services and statistics can be found in **Appendix 2** of this report.

Raising Awareness of our Standards

Each month managers receive corporate information to share with their team. Over the last year we have continued to raise awareness of the Welsh language policy and managers have been asked to remind their teams to:

- Send out correspondence bilingually to customers/partners, ask and record their language preference unless language preference is already known
- Reply in Welsh to correspondence received in Welsh.
- Answer the telephone bilingually and set up a bilingual answerphone message.
- Meet and greet customers bilingually.
- Know who the Welsh speakers are in each team to help deal with Welsh enquiries.
- Ensure out of office messages are bilingual.
- Self-assess and record Welsh language skills in MyNRW.
- Ensure all power point presentations are bilingual.
- All forms should be bilingual or available in both languages.
- All signage, permanent and temporary should be bilingual with the Welsh text to appear to the left or above the English text.
- Use the Translation Checklist to assess whether a document needs translating.

- Updated Telephone communication guidance.

Grŵp Pencampwyr

The Grŵp Pencampwyr (Champions Group) have met four times over the last year with representatives from across the Directorates. This includes a Welsh learner who has joined to hear the language spoken naturally in a work environment. Over the year the Pencampwyr have: -

- Promoted our Welsh language training programme.
- Raised awareness of the new recruitment guidance for managers.
- Promote ICT systems we have available for staff to use through the medium of Welsh.
- Promote Welsh language culture days.
- Re-branding our 'Cynllun Mentora' which was launched in April 2023 as "Clwb Clonc".
- Created Grŵp Pencampwyr Yammer page– to share ideas and events happening within their Directorate.
- Created Siop Siarad Cymraeg Yammer Group – where all staff can discuss matters in Welsh.

Managers Toolkit Guidance

A Manager's Toolkit page has been created on our intranet to help Managers in understanding the tasks they need to complete as a manager. It brings together all the transactional activities that are required as a manager.

Guidance on the Welsh Language Standards have been added to the page. This will help mainstream the Welsh language more into day-to-day ways of working, helping Managers monitoring their team's compliance with the Standards as part of their role. This will help in reducing complaints received from our customers.

To understand how well the Managers Toolkit Welsh language guidance has been implemented we will develop a monitoring form and carry out an exercise for Team Leaders to complete on their Teams compliance with the Standards.

Implementing our Policy Making Standards

During this reporting year a decision by The Welsh Government Tribunal confirmed the definition of the term "policy decision" referred to in Standards 88 - 89 "*any decision made by a body about the exercise of its functions or about the conduct of its business or other undertaking*". We must seek views as part of the consultation process on the effects that the decision may have on the opportunities to use the language, increase its use, any positive effects, or negative effects.

In monitoring our consultations, it was found that these questions were not always asked and needed closer monitoring. Following advice from the Welsh Language Commissioner and best practice, our guidance Consultation and Citizen Space guidance was updated and require questions in relation to the language be asked in all consultations regardless of their nature, this ensures consultees can provide us with that information and for the feedback considered as part of our decision-making processes.

Over the next year we will monitor the responses received to help ensure that the feedback provided forms part of our decision-making processes.

This is a requirement of Standards 84-89.

Implementing our Operational Standards

ICT

In September our new ICT internal Service Management Service was launched, this new service which all staff will use is more interactive and efficient to give a better ICT service and is available to be used in Welsh. This service allows all our staff to raise a ticket for help, support, advice, or new services from ICT without needing to phone or email and stay updated on progress and resolution times. This new service was promoted to all staff on the intranet and by email.

The system has been developed following our internal ICT guidance for systems where all or a large group of staff will use to develop or procure in Welsh if possible.

Information to new staff

To ensure new staff are aware of our requirement to work bilingually and be aware of our Welsh Language Standards we take the following steps: -

- Each new member of staff receives an email from our Welsh Language Training Co-Ordinator welcoming them to the organisation and providing information on our Welsh Language Scheme, Welsh Language Training programme, the need to self-assess and record language skills in MyNRW and inviting them to attend a Welsh Language Awareness course.
- A checklist is in place for managers to go through with each new member of staff, included in the checklist is the need to explain our Welsh Language Standards and to self-assess their language skills in MyNRW. This checklist is signed by staff member and line manager and is kept on file by our Recruitment Team.

This is a requirement of Standard 129.

Induction course

When the Covid restrictions were introduced our Induction course moved from face to face to on-line. Due to the success of the course and the smooth transition, we intend to continue with this format and continue in developing this course further.

Following the introduction of the simultaneous translation facility on Microsoft Teams at the end of 2022, we will now be able to facilitate this online course bilingually. We are in the process of reviewing all the course content, and with the support of our Translation Team most of the revised course content will be ready by the next cohort which is due to take place in May 2023. The reviewed course includes a presentation on the Welsh Language Standards and how we implement them and what support is available to enable all our staff to work bilingually.

Whilst most of the on-screen presentations are bilingual, all accompanying documentation is provided in both Welsh and English, not all presentations are made in Welsh. This will be dependent on the individual presenting and the expertise required to explain the subject matter. We will continue to develop the course in a blended way, with some of the content being presented in Welsh only and using simultaneous translation to facilitate these sessions. This will provide non-Welsh speaking staff with the experience of hearing the language spoken naturally in a work environment and seeing it written in the presentations. We will continue in developing a Welsh medium course over the next year.

This is a requirement of Standard 129.

Welsh Language Awareness Training

We have started trialling a few different providers to deliver this training, 60 members of staff have attended awareness sessions during this reporting period.

On St David's Day 2023, we held a 'Cymraeg a Chi' awareness to all NRW staff. This session was a first of three designed to discuss how everyone's language journey is different and that we are all continue to learn even if we consider ourselves fluent Welsh speakers. This session was met with great feedback and was a great way to celebrate St David's Day.

This is a requirement of Standard 128.

Welsh Language Training Programme

Over this reporting period, 173 members of staff are attending Welsh language training at various levels. This is an increase of 35 from last year:

- Most of our learners this year are based in Ceredigion and Powys 27% (46) and North West 24% (41).
- 17% (29) of our learners are or near being fluent Welsh speakers.
- If the 10% (18) who are currently learning at Intermediate level continue learning, they will become fluent Welsh speakers within the next 3 to 4 years.

Welsh language skills of our workforce play a major part in our ability to communicate effectively with Welsh speakers. Whilst most of our learners are in the Welsh speaking heartlands of Ceredigion, North Powys and North West, we need to encourage more of our staff to develop their language skills in South West Wales where the language is also spoken widely. 11 members of staff are currently developing their language skills in this area, and this will help us in building trusting relationships and in being able to provide an "active offer" helping to ensure people's needs are understood and met.

This is a requirement of Standard 126, 127 and 128.

More information on our Training programme can be found in **Appendix 3** of this report.

Awards

In 2022, NRW won the Work Welsh Employer of the Year for 2022. This was awarded for the support we provide to our staff members to enable them to commit to learning Welsh. This was a great achievement for NRW, and we have celebrated this accolade internally and on our social media pages. Support includes our mentoring scheme, allocating time during the working week for staff to study, covering the cost of Welsh courses and course books and allowing for study leave during working hours. Our staff were also praised for the determination and perseverance during the disturbance caused by Covid-19.

Coleg Gwent also awarded our NRW Advanced Welsh course with Workplace Class of the Year for 2022. The group's tutor nominated the class for this award due to their continuous contribution, enthusiasm, and dedication to learning Welsh, particularly during lockdown and with their ever-changing work commitments and emergencies. The award-winning Welsh learners have been learning Welsh since 2013.

The learners shared their top tips to successful learning:

- “Dal ati” (keep going) to lessons
- Join additional sessions if able to e.g., “Sadwrn Siarad” helping to achieve and use Welsh skills outside the classroom
- Listening to “Say Something in Welsh” every day, when going for a walk
- Use Welsh language skills whenever possible to practice speaking, with friends, family at meetings in work or even to the cashier at the shop

Wales aim to have 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050 and as an organisation we embrace this challenge by encouraging and supporting our staff to take up an opportunity to learn Welsh.

The Welsh Government has published the [Anti-racist Wales Action Plan \(ARWAP\)](#), with a vision of ‘A Wales which is Anti-racist by 2030’. ARWAP sets out to tackle institutional and structural racial inequalities in Wales in order to make ‘meaningful and measurable changes to the lives of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people by tackling racism’ and achieve ‘**a Wales that is anti-racist by 2030**’.

1. Education and Welsh Language: More is done to promote access to the Welsh language by ethnic minority communities in the areas of education, language learning, the workplace and community activities.

- NRW have a Welsh Language Training programme in place to. This support colleagues develop their Welsh language skills, though not specifically targeting ethnic minority people, the courses are available to help all staff develop their language skills in work time across Wales.

- NRW won 'Work Welsh Employer of the Year', and one of our Advanced Welsh courses has been awarded 'Workplace Class of the Year' with Coleg Gwent for 2022. Three of the Welsh learners happened to be from ethnically diverse backgrounds, respectively, including ‘other white’.

Coed y Brenin – supporting learners

Coed y Brenin Visitor Centre is in one of the Welsh speaking heartlands of Wales. A few of the staff are learning Welsh and each Wednesday a “paned a sgwrs” (cuppa and a chat) session takes place to practice their spoken Welsh informally with colleagues.

In March an “Am Dro a Sgwrs” (Walk and Chat) session led by Eryri National Park staff took place from the Centre. This provided learners the opportunity to practice their Welsh skills. It is important that visitors experience that “sense of place” when visiting Coed y Brenin in being greeted bilingually by our staff. Hearing the language spoken, seeing it written on our signage and pamphlets as well as being able to use the language however little with our staff, helps to create a unique experience for those visiting the centre.

Launch of Recruitment Guidance

Following the trial of a new process for assessing the language level of each new or vacant post prior to advertising, where Managers follow the guidance and complete a Microsoft Teams form to capture the assessment. The guidance was launched in September 2022, is available on the intranet and promoted in Managers Monthly. The Recruitment Team have access to the assessments and will check that the process has been completed for each vacancy prior to advertising. The form is monitored to ensure the

guidance is followed and to ensure there are Welsh speakers in all our teams who deal with the public regularly.

This is a requirement of Standards 132 and 132a.

Promoting Welsh culture and language

Over the last year, we have celebrated several events virtually and one event face to face. to promote Welsh language and culture both internally and externally. The events we have celebrated this year are: -

- Calan Mai– 1 May – article on our internal intranet page explaining the history of the event.
- Canmlwyddiant Urdd Centenary – 11 May – shared the message of peace and God will on our Social Media platforms
- 25th Birthday of the Wales Coast Path
- #TeamNRW day – 15 June – had a Welsh language training stand offering ‘Cymraeg Gwaith’ lanyards and ‘Dwi’n Dysgu Cymraeg’ badges. This also allowed learners to meet in a face-to-face setting.
- Diwrnod Shwmae Day – 15 October – article on our internal intranet and sharing posters produced by Learn Welsh and Mentrau Iaith on Yammer
- Welsh Language Rights Day – 7 December – NRW staff created a video explaining the importance of Welsh to them. This video also included some of our learners who explained how important learning Welsh is to them.
- Welsh Learners Blog – week commencing 12 December – this was to celebrate winning ‘Workplace Class of the Year for 2022’
- Diwrnod Santes Dwynwen Day – 25 January – article on the intranet and sharing photos on Yammer
- Dydd Miwsig Cymraeg/ Welsh Music Day– February – started a chat on Yammer about Welsh music and bands
- Dydd Gwyl Dewi/ St David’s Day – 1 March – arranged “Cymraeg a Chi” Welsh Language Awareness course. Côr Cyfoeth also recorded Calon Lân especially in celebration of the day which was posted on the intranet and on social media.
- Diwrnod y llyfr/ World Book Day– 2 March – started a conversation on Yammer about different Welsh books available.

Recreation Team

Following the decision taken by the National Park Authority regarding the use of Welsh names Eryri and Yr Wyddfa only moving forward, in direct response our Recreation Team have updated our website to reflect this change. As several of our recreation sites are in the National Park and promoted on our Days Out pages on the website, it was decided to put Eryri (Snowdonia) in the titles and in the first mention section of the text, then use Eryri in the rest. All mention of the National Park has been updated to Eryri National Park and the same approach has been taken for Yr Wyddfa.

This was felt to be the best approach initially and will be re-visited at some point in the future when the use of Eryri and Yr Wyddfa is more well known. Using Welsh names gives those visiting the area the opportunity to engage with the Welsh language and culture.

Historic Place Names

As an organisation we have a statutory duty to consult and add to the List of Historic Place Names which contains hundreds of thousands of place names collected from historical

maps and other sources. It provides an insight into the land-use, archaeology, and history of Wales. Historic place names link us with the past, our history and culture. Study of the place names (toponymy) of an area can strengthen a sense of belonging and continuity with previous generations and with our heritage.

Our Landscape, Planning and Energy Team have worked alongside the Welsh Language Commissioner and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) developed and published Operational Guidance Note (OGN) 124 Historic Place Names. The guidance is aimed at all staff who are involved in any naming activities or staff who may come across historic names which may not yet be listed e.g., in the purchase of new land where historic field names are shared. We understand this may be the first public body specific guidance relating to Historic Placenames in Wales.

In March 2023 a bilingual training event was held using the simultaneous translation facility in Microsoft Teams. Presentations were delivered from NRW, the RCAHMW and the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office and covered the List of Historic Placenames and Statutory Guidance, the importance of standardising Welsh place names, OGN124 and examples of NRW place name activity. The event was attended by 65 members of staff and recorded for those who could not make the live event.

We now plan to look at ways of connecting areas across the organisation involved in place name activity, to collate and report this information in one place enabling us to report that NRW are meeting our statutory duties regarding the List of Historic Place Names.

Team NRW Day

In June our annual #Team NRW Day was held in Aberystwyth. This is an event which all staff are invited to attend in person or online. The Welsh language formed part of planning process from the start and several the main presenters on the day did so bilingually, all display material was bilingual, with a mixture of Welsh and English videos produced for the day.

By ensuring sufficient time in planning and consideration given to the language, the event ran smoothly and naturally bilingually without the use of simultaneous translators on the day.

Record Keeping Standards

Our Standards require that we keep records as follows:

The number of employees who have Welsh language skills at the end of the year in question on the basis of the records kept in accordance with standard 145

Over the last year our headcount has gone up by 87 and we have seen a steady increase in the language skills of our staff at most levels, with the highest percentage of our Welsh speakers fluent in both written and spoken Welsh at Level 5 (14.8%). Most of our fluent Welsh speakers (331) are in our Operations Directorate. Overall, 750 (32%) of our staff can discuss matters in Welsh with others at Levels, 3, 4 and 5, with 93.7% of our staff are able to show linguistic courtesy when meeting and greeting others.

The number of fluent Welsh speakers have increased by 16 through our recruitment process. The percentage increase from last year does not reflect this due to the increase in our overall staff numbers.

Staff are asked to self assess their language skills and record in MyNRW. The Welsh language skills of our staff in March 2022 can be found below:

- Level 5 = 348 (14.8%)
- Level 4 = 223 (9.5%)
- Level 3 = 179 (7.6%)
- Level 2 = 469 (20%)
- Level 1 = 980 (41.8%)
- No skills = 98 (4.2%)
- 49 (2.1%) are yet to self-assess their language skills.

Analysis of our fluent Welsh speakers show that:

- The majority are aged between 30-39 (159)
- 124 are aged between 50-59
- 50 are aged 60+
- 317 are male and 254 females
- 83 work part-time
- The highest numbers are in Grades 5 and 6 (272) with the lowest numbers (24) at our more senior Grades of 9 and above.
- 57 new starters are fluent Welsh speakers
- 28 fluent Welsh speakers have left during this reporting year

More information on the Welsh language skills of staff can be found in **Appendix 4** of this report.

The number of staff who attended training courses offered in Welsh during the year on the basis of the records kept in accordance with standard 146. If a Welsh version of a course was offered during the year, the percentage of the total number of staff attending the course who attended the Welsh version on the basis of the records kept in accordance with standard 124.

During this reporting period none of the courses listed below were offered in Welsh as required in accordance with Standard 146:

- recruitment and interviewing – online using Microsoft Teams
- performance management – online using Microsoft Teams
- complaints and disciplinary procedures – no courses taken place
- induction – online using Microsoft Teams
- dealing with the public – no courses taken place
- health and safety – some face-to-face technical training

Most of our courses have continued online during this period apart from some health and safety technical courses.

The Recruitment Team will over the next year be developing and aiming to deliver the in-house recruitment and interviewing course in Welsh.

We are liaising with a company to deliver the courses mentioned below in Welsh in the future:

- Interviewing skills for interviewees
- Interviewing skills for interviewers

The number of new and vacant posts advertised during the year which were categorised as requiring Welsh language skills as essential, desirable, needed to be learnt when appointed to the post, or not necessary on the basis of the records kept in accordance with standard 148.

Some vacancies are advertised both internally and externally simultaneously. 456 were appointed from internal candidates, 290 from external candidates and 6 secondees from other public bodies, 752 in total.

All posts are advertised requiring Level 1 as the minimum language, training is given to staff who need to attain this level of understanding to show linguistic courtesy.

Number of posts advertised during this reporting period were as follows:

Language Level	Essential	Desirable	Welsh to be learnt
Level 5 – fluency in spoken and written Welsh	5	0	0
Level 4 – fluency in spoken Welsh	48	0	0
Level 3 - The ability to communicate in Welsh with confidence in some work situations	36	30	7
Level 1 – The ability to pronounce basic Welsh names, phrases, and greetings	622	0	0

Analysis of the above stats and language abilities of staff who secured roles through our recruitment process, both internally and externally during this reporting period are as follows:

- 118 are Welsh speakers at Level 5
- 69 are Welsh speakers at Level 4
- 79 are Welsh speakers at Level 3
- 134 are Welsh speakers at Level 2
- 305 are Welsh speakers at Level 1
- 43 have no Welsh language skills

The 43 who do not meet the Level 1 minimum language level required are expected to complete the 10-hour online course provided by the National Centre for Learning Welsh. This course will need to be completed within the probationary period to help achieve this level.

The number of complaints received during the year which related to compliance with standards numbers 152, 156, 162 and 164 with which we are under a duty to comply with.

During this reporting period we received 4 complaints, this is a decrease from 10 received last year. Three complaints have come directly to us and one via the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office.

Three complaints have been resolved and one is currently part of an investigation being carried out by the Welsh Language Commissioner on our non-compliance with our Welsh Language Standards.

Complaints received were as follows:

Issue	Outcome
In May 2022 a complaint was received having found inconsistencies on the spellings of Cwm Carn found on signage at the site.	A response was sent to the customer explaining that we had received several enquiries about this. As part of the response, we set out the history and background to the spelling we use, and a link was provided for more information on 'Standard Place Names' from the Welsh Language Commissioner's website.
In September 2022 the Welsh Language Commissioner received a call from a member of the public who had received an English only fishing licence.	The Environment Agency administer this service on our behalf and apologised to the customer explaining that a recent new digital service had been launched and was not currently available in Welsh. A Welsh language card license with associated letter was available. The customer was happy to receive the Welsh version of the license. The letter also explained the developments taking place on the website in relation to a Welsh language service which was launched in November 2022.
In December 2022 we received a complaint from a customer who received an English only letter. This complaint is currently being investigated by the Welsh Language Commissioner.	In a telephone call the customer was apologised to by the staff member for the error, the Team Leader also spoke to the complainant and sent the customer an email in Welsh. The customer made a complaint to the Welsh Language Commissioner who has decided to carry out an investigation into our non-compliance with our Welsh Language Standards policy. This matter is ongoing.
In January 2023 a complaint was received from a customer who had	A response was sent to the complainant apologising and explained that the letter

received correspondence from us in Welsh but the address on the letter was in English.	had been sent from an automated system. The team concerned investigated improving and correcting the system. A revised letter with the Welsh address was sent to the customer.
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We receive complaints from our own staff on the lack of compliance with our internal language policy and Operational Standards. Due to the pandemic and working online along with the lack of simultaneous translation facilities in Microsoft Teams we are aware that at times it has been difficult to work bilingually internally. With the re-introduction of the simultaneous facility on Microsoft Teams at the end of 2022, we are now working to improve opportunities to use this facility more internally by running bilingual courses.

Commendations

The Education and Health Team were very pleased to receive commendation from Teachers for the great work they are doing in delivering training through the medium of Welsh to such a high standard. We appreciate the Teachers who took the time to acknowledge their appreciation of the team's work.

Risk of non-compliance

Fishing Licence Service on .Gov

Further work is required to ensure the landing pages on .Gov are available in Welsh, which will take place in a subsequent release of the service. Updating the pages will be dependent on engagement between Environment Agency, .Gov, their processes, and their timelines. In the meantime, a message will be published on the landing page to inform users that they are able to purchase a Fishing Licence in Welsh.

Once the above work has been carried out the whole of the Fishing Licence Purchase service will be available in Welsh and compliant with our Standards.

Floodline UK

A proactive offer of a Welsh language service is still in place, Welsh speakers are often put through to English call handlers as the service cannot guarantee a dedicated Welsh speaker to deal with Welsh medium calls. Welsh medium callers can also choose to terminate the call and receive a call back from a Welsh language agent when one becomes available.

To address this issue a project has been commissioned in NRW D&I to improve this service which will be available 24/7 by diverting Welsh language calls from Floodline UK to our Incident Communication Centre. This will mean that Welsh speakers calling Floodline UK would be provided with a seamless Welsh language service via NRW ICC. This would be equal to that of the English language service and NRW would have control over the Welsh language service as well as being able to promote the service more widely here in Wales. The project is currently due for delivery in Autumn 2023. **Once this service is operational, we will be compliant with Standards 9 and 10.**

Training

The current contract for our safety online courses has been in place since 2013 and only available in English. We are in the process of procuring a new Learning Management

System to be in place by July 2024. The system is expected to be able to host bilingual content which will enable staff to complete online courses in Welsh. **Once this capability is in place, we will be compliant with Standards 124.**

We will continue in developing a Welsh medium induction course over the next year. **Once this work is complete, we will be compliant with Standard 129.**

How we support Cymraeg 2050

Through our work in implementing and improving our Welsh language services, over the last year we have contributed to Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Strategy Action Plan for 2022/23 by:

- Supporting staff to develop their language skills for work purposes.
- Encouraging staff to use the Welsh language as part of their work.
- NRW Education Team promoting the Welsh language in all training events.
- NRW Education Team advise Welsh Government, supporting them to realise the Curriculum for Wales and the role of the Welsh natural environment within that.
- Assessing language skills for each new or vacant post, ensuring that we have staff with the Welsh language skills in the right roles and locations providing opportunities for people to use the language as part of their role and in dealing with our communities.
- Being proactive and promoting our Welsh language services.
- Operating bilingual social media accounts, promoting Welsh language culture and events to a wide audience, raising awareness that Welsh is a living language.
- Developing our digital services bilingually from the start.
- Consult and add to the List of Historic Place Names as part of our work.

How we support Anti-racist Wales Action Plan

The Welsh Government has published the [Anti-racist Wales Action Plan \(ARWAP\)](#), with a vision of 'A Wales which is Anti-racist by 2030'. ARWAP sets out to tackle institutional and structural racial inequalities in Wales in order to make 'meaningful and measurable changes to the lives of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people by tackling racism' and achieve '**a Wales that is anti-racist by 2030**'.

Education and Welsh Language: More is done to promote access to the Welsh language by ethnic minority communities in the areas of education, language learning, the workplace and community activities. We support this action in the plan by:

- Supporting colleagues to develop their Welsh language skills, though not specifically targeting ethnic minority people, the courses are available to help all staff develop their language skills in work time across Wales.
- Our Advanced Welsh courses has been awarded 'Workplace Class of the Year' with Coleg Gwent for 2022. Three of the Welsh learners happened to be from ethnically diverse backgrounds, respectively, including 'other white'.

Action Plan 2022 – 23

The action plan for 2022-23 was comprehensive with 53 actions in total, out of the actions 23 were completed, 16 in progress and 6 ongoing, 8 not started. Some of the ongoing and not been completed actions are due to other work priorities. The ongoing and not started actions will form part of the action plan for 2023–24.

Action Plan 2023-24

The priorities in our action plan for 2023- 24 will be:

- Continue to work with Environment Agency to ensure the landing pages on .Gov are available in Welsh.
- Develop the Floodline UK flood information service to be compliant with our Welsh language standards.
- Procure a new Learning Management System which will allow us to run online courses in Welsh.
- Continue to develop our Welsh medium Induction Training programme.
- Develop better ways of self-monitoring our compliance with the Standards.
- Develop our own Welsh Language Awareness training.

Conclusion

We are pleased with the progress we are making in implementing our Welsh language standards, with the number of our Welsh speaking staff increasing as well as the increase in the number of our staff who are developing their language skills for work purposes.

There are still some areas Standards we are not fully compliant with, and we are working to address these areas. Over the coming year we plan to look at ways of being more proactive in self-monitoring our compliance, this will help in mitigating some non-compliance areas.

We welcome feedback from customers on our services as this helps us in understanding their needs better and in developing future services better. As an organisation we are doing all we can to provide an active offer of a Welsh language service and in prompting customers to use our services in Welsh, with the aim of increasing their use. This work contributes towards the aim of Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Strategy and The Wellbeing Future Generations Act.

Hybrid working can at times prove to be more challenging in relation to the Welsh language, with some staff not having the same awareness in hearing the language spoken or seeing it on signage as in an office environment. With the number of our Welsh speaking staff increasing, as well as those developing their language skills, it is important we provide more opportunities for staff to work through the medium of Welsh across the organisation and a timely commitment in our Corporate Plan. How we work internally reflects our work externally and this will help in building those trusted relationships and sharing important messages with our Welsh speaking partners and customers.

Our Translation Team now has the capacity to be more creative in how they work and able to do so collaboratively helps to ensure the Welsh language is an important part of the work we do, rather than a translation at the end of a process. We want people to use our services and this way of working will hopefully encourage more use our services in Welsh as we have seen with the increase in the use of our Welsh language online services.

Appendix 1

Education and Health Team

Resources for educators and teachers

All education resources are available in Welsh on our webpage and on Hwb. New resources uploaded this financial year have included:

- [Green Energy](#)
- [Wales Coast Path](#)
- [Sand dunes](#)
- [Teaching safe campfire and tool skills](#)

Feedback on our resources: 'Mae wastad yn ddefnyddiol i gael adnoddau parod yn y Gymraeg - mae nhw o safon uchel.' (It is always useful to have resources ready in Welsh – they are of a high standard).

Working with others

Members from the team have worked in partnership with the following to promote the Welsh language and:

- Staywise Cymru to produce a bilingual Wales specific version of Staywise UK Blue Light website for emergency workers, education professionals, families, and learners to access personal safety learning resources.
- The Gwent Living Levels project – helping to develop bilingual learning resources for Guides, Brownies, and Rainbows Alien Invaders badge.
- Flood Awareness Wales to review our existing bi-lingual suite of resources.
- Sands of Life project team to produce a new suite of bi-lingual resources.

National campaigns and events

Both national campaigns in 2022/23 – Acorn Antics and Wales Outdoor Learning Week which we organise in partnership with the Wales Council for Outdoor Learning were run bilingually. Dedicated Welsh #'s for groups to engage through the medium of Welsh if they wish.

- #MiriMes
- #WythnosDysguAwyrAgored

Appendix 2

Flood Warning & Informing Services Statistics

Floodline

The table below shows overall there are still small percentages of Welsh Language customers.

	2019-2020*		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023	
	Cym	Eng	Cym	Eng	Cym	Eng	Cym	Eng
Floodline callers – language choice	307 (3.1%)	9,652	244 (4.1%)	5,713	176 (3.2%)	5,334	114 (4.4%)	2,473
Floodline callers – pre-recorded live warning information	95 (1.3%)	7,456	94 (2.4%)	3,789	59 (1.6%)	3,567	46 (2.9%)	1,533
Floodline callers – calls to Agents	25 (2%)	1,256	61 (5.3%)	1,067	58 (7.4%)	729	25 (5.3%)	443

Table 1: Callers to Floodline. *2019-2020 data is from July 2019 only.

Flood Warnings, Alerts and Flood Risk Services

	2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023	
	Cym	Eng	Cym	Eng	Cym	Eng	Cym	Eng
Flood Warnings & Alerts webpage views	10,257 (0.95%)	1,067,767	6,771 (0.8%)	856,914	4,843 (0.5%)	1,024,469	2,971 (0.3%)	901,042
5 Day Flood Risk for Wales webpage views	489 (0.73%)	66,570	570 (0.3%)	174,150	346 (0.1%)	336,933	655 (0.2%)	335,049

Table 2: NRW Webpage Views

Appendix 3

Welsh Language Training

This year, we have 173 members of staff currently enrolled in Welsh Language training at various levels. This figure is up by 35 from last year.

Course	Learners 2022/23	Percentage
Entry	80	47%
Foundation	44	25%
Intermediate	18	10%
Advanced	29	17%
Proficiency	1	1%
Total	173	100%

Region	Learners 2022/23	Percentage
Cardiff	9	5%
Carmarthenshire	8	5%
Ceredigion/Powys	46	27%
Glamorgan	0	0%
Gwent	32	18%
North East	18	10%
North West	41	24%
Pembrokeshire	3	2%
Swansea Bay	13	7%
The Vale	0	0%
Cymraeg Gwaith (Self-taught option)	3	2%
Total	173	100%

Nant Gwrtheyrn

Six NRW staff members have attended intensive courses provided virtually and residentially by Nant Gwrtheyrn this year. These have not been included in the above as they are not currently enrolled on a course.

Nant Gwrtheyrn offer intensive courses for all abilities and some of these are free of charge through Work Welsh scheme.

Once funding has been confirmed by the Welsh Government for 2023/24 for Work Welsh courses, we have a few members of staff hoping to run NRW specific courses directly with Nant Gwrtheyrn due to the positive experience they had during their previous courses.

Learn Welsh

Over the last year, some of the Learn Welsh providers have offered face to face courses to its learners and some NRW staff members have returned to the classroom for their learning. However, majority of our staff have remained learning virtually, as it is easier to access and, environmentally friendly, which is important to NRW staff.

This year, we have also been able to offer a self-taught option to some of our staff. This is provided by Learn Welsh – Work Welsh. We particularly offered this to members of staff who knew they wouldn't be able to commit to weekly courses on regular basis (due to work commitments, illness etc). This has proven to be successful method for these individuals.

Say Something in Welsh

Say Something in Welsh (SSiW) is a subscription we have now rolled out and offer to all our staff, whether they are on permanent or on short terms contacts. It is also a learning method encouraged by Learn Welsh. We also offer this as a stop gap for staff that are waiting to register for a Learn Welsh course.

Due to this, SSiW figures have not been included in the above stats as some learners that have registered for Mynediad/Entry courses have also registered for SSiW.

We currently have 26 learners enrolled on Say Something in Welsh.

Personal skills

For 2023/24, several personal skills sessions have been booked. These will be delivered bilingually. These will be advertised internally and open to all staff to attend. The sessions booked so far are

- Resilience and Wellbeing
- Having Honest Conversations

Yammer

Over the last year, we have been updating our Welsh language Yammer pages regularly. This is updated by the Welsh language training co-ordinator regularly with hints, tips, training recommendations and courses for NRW staff. This is a great way to communicate informally with NRW staff, and they are very responsive on there too.

- Dysgu Cymraeg
- Hyfforddiant Cymraeg



Appendix 4

Staff self assessment of Welsh Language Skills at March 2023

Date	No return completed	No language skills	Able to pronounce basic phrases and greetings	Able to construct basic sentences	Able to discuss some work matters confidently	Fluent Welsh speaker	Fluent in both spoken and written Welsh
March 2023	49 (2.1%)	98 (4.2%)	980 (41.8%)	469 (20%)	179 (7.6%)	223 (9.5%)	348(14.8%)
March 2022	43 (2%)	88 (3.9%)	942 (41.7%)	456 (20%)	175 (7.8%)	221 (9.8%)	334 (14.8%)
February 2021	109 (4.9%)	87(3.9%)	915(40.9%)	438 (19.6%)	153 (6.8%)	225 (10%)	310 (13.9%)
March 2020	134 (6.5%)	63 (3.1%)	820 (40.0%)	412 (20.1%)	136 (6.6%)	211 (10.3%)	275 (13.4%)

Headcount March 2023 = 2346 – Number and percentage of Welsh speakers in March 2023 = 571 (24.3%)

Headcount March 2022 = 2259 – Number and percentage of Welsh speakers in March 2022 = 555 (24.6%)

Headcount February 2021 = 2237 - Number and percentage of Welsh speakers in February 2021 = 535 (24%)

Headcount March 2020 = 2051 - Number and percentage of Welsh speakers in March 2020 = 486 (23.7%)

Welsh language skills by Directorate – March 2023

Directorate	No Return Completed	No understanding of Welsh	Able to pronounce basic Welsh phrases and names	Able to construct basic Welsh sentences	Able to discuss some work matters confidently	Fluency in spoken Welsh	Fluency in spoken and written Welsh	Grand Total
CCC	4	4	29	20	10	11	41	119
CSD	4	2	40	34	5	12	23	120
EPP	7	27	278	139	56	48	66	621
FCS	3	14	83	36	15	16	23	190
OPS	31	51	550	240	93	136	195	1296
TOTAL	49	98	980	469	179	223	348	2346

Welsh language skills by Age profile March 2023

Age	No Return Completed	No understanding of Welsh	Able to pronounce basic Welsh phrases and names	Able to construct basic Welsh sentences	Able to discuss some work matters confidently	Fluency in spoken Welsh	Fluency in spoken and written Welsh	Grand Total
<20	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	4
22 - 29	9	17	89	32	13	19	66	245
30 - 39	9	21	206	113	41	54	105	549
40 - 49	12	26	314	164	60	75	77	728
50 - 59	13	27	299	124	51	55	69	638
60 +	5	7	71	36	13	19	31	182

Grand Total	49	98	980	469	179	223	348	2346
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Welsh language skills by sex – Full-Time/Part-Time Employees March 2023

Sex Full-Time Part-Time	No Return Completed	No understanding of Welsh	Able to pronounce basic Welsh phrases and names	Able to construct basic Welsh sentences	Able to discuss some work matters confidently	Fluency in spoken Welsh	Fluency in spoken and written Welsh	Grand Total
Female	23	48	432	246	95	95	159	1098
FT	15	42	334	182	68	68	127	836
PT	8	6	98	64	27	27	32	262
Male	26	50	548	223	84	128	189	1248
FT	26	48	517	209	79	114	179	1172
PT		2	31	14	5	14	10	76
Total	49	98	980	469	179	223	348	2346

Welsh language skills by each grade March 2023

Grade	No Return Completed	No understanding of Welsh	Able to pronounce basic Welsh phrases and names	Able to construct basic Welsh sentences	Able to discuss some work matters confidently	Fluency in spoken Welsh	Fluency in spoken and written Welsh	Grand Total
G1								
G2	8	8	27	13	6	10	13	85
G3	3	7	47	11	2	18	28	116
G4	12	14	140	53	17	41	65	342

G5	10	30	258	106	53	58	91	606
G6	7	18	252	150	50	50	73	600
G7	4	11	134	85	30	30	39	333
G8	2	2	78	33	13	9	22	159
G9	2	2	33	13	5	6	10	71
G10		1	1	1			1	4
G11	1	4	9	3	1	1	5	24
EXEC		1	1	2	1		1	6
Total	49	98	980	469	179	223	348	2346

Welsh language skills of new starters and leavers March 2023

	No Return Completed	No understanding of Welsh	Able to pronounce basic Welsh phrases and names	Able to construct basic Welsh sentences	Able to discuss some work matters confidently	Fluency in spoken Welsh	Fluency in spoken and written Welsh	Grand Total
Starters	36	24	111	37	23	39	18	288
Leavers	8	11	55	17	11	19	9	130

NRW Board Paper

Date of meeting:	19 th July 2023
Title of Paper:	Draft Business Plan 23-24
Paper Reference:	23-07-B12
Paper sponsored by:	Clare Pillman, Chief Executive
Paper prepared by:	Kirsten Hughes, Lead Specialist Advisor, Corporate Planning & Performance
Paper presented by:	Prys Davies, Executive Director of Corporate Strategy and Development
Purpose of the paper	Approval of the draft Business Plan 23-24
Summary	We welcome the NRW Board's scrutiny regarding the draft business plan 23-24 and proposed performance measures

Background

1. In our corporate plan we recognise that we need to focus on measuring our own performance and impact in delivering our well-being objectives and steps to take, so we can be held to account by Ministers and the people of Wales.
2. The corporate plan sets out our commitment to develop our approach to performance with the development of new integrated, outcome focussed indicators aligned to the well-being objectives and steps to take.
3. While we take forward this development work the business plan for 2023/24 rolls forward the measures from the 2022/23 business plan as they align to the well-being objectives.
4. This business plan sets out what we will deliver in the first year of that corporate plan in 2023/24, and the resources (staff and financial) we will use to do this.

5. The business plan and performance measures are one of the NRW Board's principal means of scrutinising delivery and has been developed through close working with Leadership Team measure leads, the Executive Team and Executive Team Well-being Objective sponsors.

Risks, Risk Appetite and opportunities

6. If the annual business plan performance measures do not follow through on our ambition to deliver the new corporate plan, then the operation and reputation of NRW as the leading environmental body in Wales will be undermined.
7. If agreeing the performance measures is delayed, then there will be little time to prepare for reporting.

Wider implications

- (a) **Finance:** There is a cost to reporting our performance - the more measures we have the more time is needed to report and with that staff costs increase. It is important that we test that each measure is required and is providing information in a way that is needed for the public and the NRW Board. The size of the report and the level of detail needs to be proportionate. The Head of Finance has checked the financial implications and confirmed the Resources section.
- (b) **Equality:** An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been prepared through the development of the corporate plan which will be updated to cover the annual business plans.

Next Steps

8. Following NRW Board approval, the business plan will be shared with Welsh Government Sponsorship Division for the Minister to note.

Recommendation

9. We request the NRW Board approve the 2023-24 business plan.

Index of Annexes

Annex 1 – Draft Business Plan 23-24

Approval / Consultation process

<p>Approval/consultation process</p> <p>Responsible: Who has developed the paper/process and who has had input?</p>	<p>Kirsten Hughes, Lead Specialist Advisor, Corporate Planning & Performance</p> <p>Sarah Williams, Head of Corporate Strategy and Programme Management Office</p> <p>Prys Davies, Executive Director of Corporate Strategy and Development</p>
<p>Accountable: Who is accountable for the ultimate approval? Who will be or is being asked to approve?</p>	<p>NRW Board</p>
<p>Consulted: Who has been consulted to date? Where endorsement is required, is this in place? Will further consultation be required?</p>	<p>Leadership Team (Measure Owners)</p> <p>Executive Team (Well-being Objective Sponsors)</p> <p>Finance Committee</p>
<p>Informed: Who has been informed or who needs to be further information about the work?</p>	<p>Leadership Team</p> <p>Planning & Resources Group</p> <p>Executive Team</p> <p>NRW Board</p>

Annex 1 – Draft NRW Business Plan 2023/24

Introduction

- We have just published our new corporate plan up to 2030 - 'Nature and People Thriving Together', which sets out our vision, mission and well-being objectives to 2030.
- In our corporate plan we identify the importance of measuring our own performance and impact in delivering our well-being objectives and steps to take, so that we can be held to account by Ministers and the people of Wales.
- We set out our commitment to strengthening our performance framework with the development of integrated, outcome focussed indicators aligned to the well-being objectives and steps to take.
- While we take forward this development work, the NRW Board has agreed that the business plan for 2023/24 rolls forward those measures from the 2022/23 business plan that align to the well-being objectives.
- This business plan sets out what we will deliver in the first year of that corporate plan in 2023/24, and the resources (staff and financial) we will use to do this.

Nature and People Thriving together – our new corporate plan to 2030

- Our new [corporate plan](#) is centred around our three Well-being Objectives, which will help us achieve our vision of **Nature and People thriving together**. Although the corporate plan takes us to 2030, we are viewing this as a stepping stone on the way to 2050.
- Our Well-being Objectives are:
 - **Nature is recovering**
 - **Communities are resilient to climate change**
 - **Pollution is minimised**

What we will deliver in 2023/24

The tables below show those work areas where we will be tracking performance in 2023/24:

Well-being Objective 1: Nature is recovering			
Nature's recovery will be secure in 2030		Steps to Take	Measures
	Nature being protected	Improving the condition of features at protected terrestrial, marine and freshwater sites through using our advisory and regulatory tools, financial incentives and undertaking monitoring to evaluate effectiveness	Priority actions undertaken on protected sites across Wales to improve condition of features
		Protecting species at the greatest risk of extinction through using our advisory and regulatory tools, working in partnership and monitoring to evaluate effectiveness	Delivering targeted action for declining species or those on the edge of extinction
	Nature being restored	Accelerating improvements to the condition of the Marine Protected Area Network through robust monitoring and investigations, evidence, advice and working with others on project delivery	Deliver actions in the Wales Marine Protected Area (MPA) Network Management Action Plan
		Building the resilience of terrestrial, freshwater and marine protected sites transforming them into bigger, better and more effectively connected networks through using our advisory and regulatory tools, financial incentives and undertaking monitoring to evaluate effectiveness	Management of and input to programmes to address and restore habitats across Wales
		Accelerating action for nature's recovery at a landscape scale through sharing our evidence and expertise with National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and other partners	Evaluation of the case for a new National Park in North East Wales
	Nature being respected and valued in decision making	Meeting the needs of specific audiences to stimulate action for nature through collecting, managing, synthesizing, evaluating and communicating ours and others evidence	Complete our freshwater quality monitoring network
	Nature, people and communities being re-connected	Ensuring a diverse range of people are taking action for nature through sharing the vision and outcomes from Nature and Us to expand our networks and increase involvement	Sharing the vision for the natural environment to 2050 - Nature and Us

Well-being Objective 2: Communities are resilient to climate change			
		Steps to Take	Measures
Communities resilience to climate change will be secure in 2030	Nature-based solutions being widely adopted	Restoring peatland through the National Peatland Action Programme (NPAP) working with delivery partners, including on the land in our care using a range of advisory and regulatory tools, financial incentives and undertaking monitoring to evaluate effectiveness	Action undertaken to restore Welsh peatlands including peatland on the land in our care
		Creating new woodlands and restoring ancient woodlands on the land in our care through only acquiring land for woodland creation to compensate for woodland permanently converted to other land-uses and gradually changing the trees on planted ancient woodland sites to species that better reflect their nature conservation and cultural value	Area of new woodland created on the land in our care
	The risks of climate change being managed and adapted	Reducing the risk to life from flooding through managing our flood assets and infrastructure for current and future flood risk and planning for change through maintaining and adapting the flood assets and infrastructure we are accountable for	Maintain flood risk assets in high-risk systems at target condition
			Produce Flood Risk Management Plans
		Reducing the risk to life from flooding to people and communities from main rivers, reservoirs and the sea, through the delivery of flood alleviation schemes	Properties with reduced level of risk or sustained protection through capital work
		Building the resilience of communities, Local Authorities and businesses to current and future flood risk through improving and sharing our evidence to stimulate action	Implement Flood Review recommendations/ actions
	Climate emissions being reduced	Securing the timber producing potential of the Welsh Government Woodland Estate through providing harvestable timber meeting global standards of sustainable forest management	Timber volume offered to market
	Sustained action on climate change being taken by people, communities and businesses	Ensuring a diverse range of people are taking action for climate through sharing the vision and outcomes from Nature and Us to expand our networks and increase involvement	Sharing the vision for the natural environment to 2050 - Nature and Us
NRW being an exemplar organisation for a carbon positive public sector	Reducing vehicle emissions through the use of ultra-low emission vehicles wherever possible, using biodiesel and fuel efficiency measures in the interim	Develop a low emission fleet and deliver a low emission and climate adapted built estate	

Well-being Objective 3: Pollution is minimised			
		Steps to Take	Measures
Nature and people will be protected from the impacts of pollution in 2030	Effective use of regulatory tools and approaches	Ensuring the sectors we regulate, including illegal non-permitted activities, take effective action to control and reduce pollution and increase resource efficiency through the provision of advice and guidance that effectively sets out the standards required to ensure compliance	Category 1 and category 2 compliance breaches are subjected to further compliance effort (action or review)
		Minimising pollution of land and water through collaborative working to stimulate positive action and build effective solutions	NRW progress on key deliverables for Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) Rivers Project
		Protecting the environment and improving environmental performance of water companies through effective challenge of their investment programmes to secure action to improve	Deliver NRW input to the various Water Company Planning Programmes
		Minimising pollution in highly protected and designated waters through identifying the actions required of a range of sectors	Deliver programmes to review statutory water quality requirements
		Restoring water quality in catchments affected by the legacy of abandoned metal mines through using our evidence and working collaboratively to identify priorities for action	Progress of our work to reduce pollution from metal mines
	Incident response being risk based	Minimising harm from environmental pollution incidents through preparing for and responding to priority incidents as a Category 1 responder	Response to incidents initially categorised as 'High' within 4 hours
		Minimising the harm from serious environmental crime through investigating incidents and taking strong and decisive action	Decision on an appropriate enforcement response within 3 months
	Sustained action to minimise pollution being taken by people, communities and businesses	Ensuring a diverse range of people are taking action to minimise pollution through sharing the vision and outcomes from Nature and Us to expand our networks and increase involvement	Sharing the vision for the natural environment to 2050 - Nature and Us

Service Level Agreements (SLAs)

- During 2022/23 we developed and agreed levels of service across key areas of our work with Welsh Government. These SLAs cover the following work areas:
 - Flood risk management
 - NRW Estate (including Woodland Estate)

- Pollution Incident Management
- Enforcement
- Water Quality
- Enabling tree planting
- Freshwater Monitoring
- Terrestrial monitoring
- Control of Agricultural Pollution Regulations
- Marine monitoring

Each SLA identifies the resources required (£ and FTE) to deliver different levels of service. Not all areas of our work are covered by SLAs. We will be developing these over the next 12-18 months to provide complete coverage cover all areas of the business.

Resources

- Our funding comes from several sources, with the majority as Grant in Aid from Welsh Government – both revenue and capital, with a proportion ringfenced for our flood and coastal erosion risk management work. Our other funding sources are from our commercial activities (including timber sales), charging, Welsh Government grants and other grants (such as from the Lottery and formerly, EU grants).
- Our expenditure is split between staff costs, non-staff costs and capital and revenue projects.
- We employ approximately 2,400 staff directly throughout Wales and work with a wide range of partners, including providing grant funding ourselves, or on behalf of the Welsh Government.
- The following tables show our financial and staff position for 2023/24:

2023-24 EXPENDITURE BUDGET

Directorate	Staff £000	Non-Staff £000	Revenue Projects £000	Capital Projects £000	Total £000
Communications, Customer & Commercial	6,116	15,634	0	0	21,750
Corporate Strategy & Development	8,512	1,894	160	0	10,566
Evidence, Policy & Permitting	31,045	29,295	4,010	5,241	69,591
Finance & Corporate Services	7,691	19,409	1,400	10,426	38,926
Operations	56,919	22,972	7,083	38,470	125,444
Total Expenditure Budget	110,284	89,204	12,653	54,137	266,278

Our Performance Framework

- With the publication of our corporate plan in April 2023 we are at the start of a new business planning cycle. If we are to follow through on the ambition in our corporate plan we need to strengthen and improve our organisational business planning and performance framework to ensure we prioritise delivery of those things that matter most.
- We need to move to a well-defined and robust process that will enable prioritisation, enhance scrutiny, empower and facilitate decision making to ensure we effectively deliver our corporate plan vision. The framework will need to capture and represent the broader multiple benefits that are realised through our work for people, nature, climate and to minimise pollution. This wider, integrated perspective must inform our choices about where we allocate our resources, in line with the sustainable development principle.
- We are developing strategic indicators aligned to the well-being objectives against which we will measure progress over the period 2023-2030. Supporting this will be operational performance metrics and milestones aligned to the annual business plan. We will seek feedback on the proposed strategic indicators in September 2023 with a view to using them from 1 April 2024.
- Performance will be scrutinised by our Executive Team and members of our Board on a regular basis throughout the year, helping to ensure resources are directed to where they can provide the most benefit.

We hope you find our business plan interesting and useful. If you have any queries or comments, please get in touch at corporate.planning@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk

NRW Board Paper

Date of meeting:	19 th July 2023
Title of Paper:	Summary reflections on local well-being planning in Wales
Paper Reference:	23-07-B13
Paper sponsored by:	Ceri Davies, Executive Director of Evidence, Policy and Permitting; Gareth O'Shea, Executive Director of Operations
Paper prepared by:	Fen Turner- Natural Resources & Well-being Strategy and Policy Team Leader
Paper presented by:	Fen Turner- Natural Resources & Well-being Strategy and Policy Team Leader
Purpose of the paper	Discussion
Summary	<p>The “<i>summary reflections on local well-being planning in Wales</i>” paper (Annex 1) reflects on NRW’s experience in contributing to this most recent and second statutory cycle of creation, approval, and publication of the 13 local Well-being Plans (WBPs) across Wales.</p> <p>The paper provides a useful opportunity for the NRW Board (and others in NRW) to reflect on factors relating to the well-being of local communities which are common across Wales and how NRW as a whole organisation might like to respond to them.</p> <p>The discussion provides an opportunity for the NRW Board to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How and where the well-being needs and opportunities of communities identified in this work might usefully inform NRW’s approaches to delivering our Corporate Plan • How NRW might seek to land ‘transformative change’ for nature and climate in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis; how we lead and engage for this change; how we involve others in this change

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where there are opportunities to adapt work areas across NRW to better support our PSB and wider partnerships in delivering well-being outcomes for local communities • How the NRW Board would like to ensure that this work contributes to helping Wales achieve the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) |
|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Background

1. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a key responsibility on Public Services Boards (PSBs) in Wales to develop and implement Well-being Plans that align with the Act's objectives and promote the well-being of future generations.
2. Each PSB must prepare and publish a local Well-being Plan every five years. These plans should set out how the PSB intends to improve the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being of its area by setting local objectives and steps to take to meet those objectives which will maximise the contribution made by the PSB to achieving the well-being goals.
3. The most recent round of well-being planning (2022-2023) has now concluded with 13 Well-being Plans being approved and published across Wales with the final batch of Well-being Plans being approved by the NRW Board at an Extraordinary Board Meeting on the 14/06/23.
4. Nine of our PSB Well-being Plans were given 'full approval' by the NRW Board with four of the Plans given 'approval with additional comments' (conditions)¹.
5. NRW is a statutory member of all 13 PSBs across Wales. These partnerships will now move into delivering the Well-being Plans over the next five years.
6. At the NRW Board meeting in January 2023, the Chair of the NRW Board requested that a national analysis of our PSB partnership key challenges and opportunities be undertaken following approval of all local Well-being Plans. This paper 'closes the loop' on that exercise and proposes/invites a refreshed approach to helping achieve the objectives of the newly approved Well-being Plans across Wales.
7. The paper "Summary reflections on local well-being planning in Wales" ("Summary Reflections") is included in Annex 1 of this paper and should be read in conjunction with it.

¹ Swansea, Gwent, Neath & Port Talbot, Gwynedd & Môn PSBs received an approval letter which included additional comments from the NRW Board in relation to points of interest or concern that might require further future focus.

8. The “Summary Reflections” paper reflects on our experience as an organisation in contributing to this most recent round of well-being planning and approval by the NRW Board and related Leadership, Oversight, and Practitioner groups who contributed to the sign off process. It provides a useful starting point for exploring how NRW as a whole organisation could respond to the well-being needs of local communities in a more strategic and integrated way with key national partners.
9. The accompanying “Summary Reflections” paper should provide a useful opportunity for the NRW Board (and others) to reflect on:
 - a. **Common well-being needs of our communities in Wales (well-being demand)** - It provides a national overview of key well-being related factors which are common across Wales.
 - b. **What our contribution as a whole organisation can be to this work** - The paper provides examples of specific strategic approaches which may better enable delivery of well-being related outcomes across a number of our PSB partnerships.
10. The situational analysis (part one) provided in the “Summary Reflections” paper identifies the following well-being related factors which are common across a number of local Well-being Plans:
 - Twelve of the thirteen Well-being Plans have developed objectives which make explicit reference to the environment in some way with four of our PSBs making direct reference to the Nature or Climate Emergencies.
 - Our PSB Well-being Objectives, the Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives and local Area Statements priorities are closely aligned.
 - There has been an increase in objectives relating to environmental well-being in this cycle of well-being planning.
 - Whilst there is clearly an ambition and commitment for our PSBs to be working together to address the Climate and Nature Emergencies in partnership, it is our view that we are not currently operating in the ‘Transformative space’ when it comes to addressing the Climate and Nature Emergencies (as advocated by the State of Natural Resources Report – SoNaRR) with these partnerships.²
 - The Climate Emergency is frequently more prominent across local Well-being Plans than the Nature Emergency.
 - All of our PSBs recognise the need to act on climate risk and adaptation but many lack the capability and capacity to undertake this work.

² A similar message was reflected following the previous round of local well-being planning by former NRW Board Member Howard Davies. Those reflections can be found in Annex 2 of this document

- Poverty, inequality, and the cost-of-living crisis are a consistent and significant pressure on communities and public services, and this is recognised across all Plans.
- There are significant gaps in integrated policy, evidence, and strategic approaches to support this work in NRW.

11. The response analysis (part two) provided in the paper explores what NRW might mean by “transformation” for nature and climate in the PSB setting. It also explores the opportunities for taking strategic approaches to achieving such transformative outcomes.
12. This paper focuses on what NRW *could* do as a statutory partner and potential change maker in these key statutory partnerships. It does not however explore “how” such strategic approaches might be initiated and enabled across NRW, what mechanisms and leavers we would utilise or what methods of involving our partners and stakeholders in such a discussion would be most effective. This would be the next logical step to the enacting of a more integrated policy and evidence framework to further enable transformative change and is one that would require a fuller exploration of associated risk and opportunity with our PSB partners.

Risks, Risk Appetite, and opportunities

13. Our general purpose, to *help Wales achieve the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources*, requires us to look beyond our traditional regulatory mechanisms and take a broader look at more systemic solutions.
14. Our PSB partnerships and the local Well-being Plans which underpin them represent a significant opportunity for NRW to drive some of the ‘transformational’ changes that Wales must realise in order to achieve all four aims of the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) and in so doing maximise Nature’s contribution to all seven Well-being Goals.
15. Other strategic, decision-making fora, including those that control the majority of funding streams, operate across Wales; there is a risk that if these are not aligned with the objectives of the Well-being Plans, that the effectiveness /impact of Well-being Plans and that of NRW in this work area, will be limited.
16. This work is directly linked to NRW’s own Well-being Objectives. There is direct synergy between the local Well-being Plans being developed with partners and our own Corporate Plan to 2030 which advocates for action to address the Climate and Nature Emergencies.
17. The majority of resource for this work is facilitated through the Place-based workforce planning decisions of the Head of Operations for each local area (Place Plans). The nature of the work however requires a more ‘transformational approach’ to delivery which Heads of Operations alone are unable to implement without full NRW organisational support.

18. It is important that we take the opportunity to review and ensure we work effectively across NRW on securing transformational change through this statutory planning role. We would be concerned if we reallocated the resources for this work elsewhere and were unable to undertake our PSB role. There would also be reputational risks for us as a valued PSB member.
19. There is also a risk that stepping back from this work would mean NRW would have to rely on other non-statutory leavers for change which might be harder to pull if we are not stepping up to our statutory responsibilities with our PSB partners.
20. In a survey of NRW PSB Practitioners, 100% of respondents agreed that we are not yet in the 'transformational space' when it comes to initiating clear opportunities for collaborative interventions with our PSB partners to address the root causes of issues (related to the Climate and Nature Emergencies). 93% of respondents agreed that our PSB partners expect NRW to provide leadership and opportunities for collaborative work in this area. Practitioners were asked to say how confident they are to be able to provide the required level of support to PSBs on specific topics (climate resilience, nature recovery, systems transformation, well-being economy, just transition, use of nature-based solutions, the wider determinants of health, and addressing inequalities). The majority of respondents (66.7%) stated that they are 'lacking in confidence' or 'not confident at all' compared to only 14.4% of respondents who stated they are 'fairly confident'. A summary of responses to the survey can be found in Annex 3.
21. This work links directly to current Strategic Risk 05 (SR05): Championing SMNR.
22. There is a risk that if NRW does not respond to the well-being needs of our local communities effectively that we will fail in our purpose as set out in the Environment (Wales) Act to help Wales achieve the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources.
23. As the lead environment body on all PSBs, NRW are often considered by partners on the PSB to provide leadership, direction, evidence, support, and opportunities for collaborative activities which will address the Climate and Nature Emergencies.
24. There is a risk that if NRW continues to advocate for 'transformative' change for nature and climate without a coherent narrative nested in well-being and being responsive to the well-being needs of local communities, that we risk reputational damage as an organisation which will work against our ambitions as set out in the Corporate Plan.
25. There is an opportunity for a coherent well-being narrative to usefully inform a number of other strategic narratives including national-level Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and Public Health Wales (PHW) as well as the "advocacy" approach for senior leaders as detailed in the Corporate Plan.
26. Our PSBs have the potential to take a leadership role in facilitating the involvement of the third and private sectors in addressing the Climate and Nature Emergencies as mentioned by the Future Generations Commissioner in his address at the Senedd during the launch of NRW Corporate Plan on the 6th of July.

27. There does not currently exist a coherent narrative, integrated framework or set of pathways for achieving SMNR at the national scale although there are a number of instrumental statutory and non-statutory levers and mechanisms which might benefit from such an approach. In addition to our PSB partnerships, examples include: SoNaRR, Area Statements, experimental powers, advocacy work, business planning, asset management, Town and Country Planning, Sustainable Farming Scheme, etc.
28. Taking a more “strategic approach” to SMNR and well-being delivery has a number of additional benefits including the opportunity to support our national stakeholders (Environmental Non-Governmental Organisations – eNGOs) to take a more active role in facilitating the delivery of SMNR in Wales and to work with them to identify pathways to Sustainable Management which we can collaborate on together.
29. The bringing together of targets relating to this area (biodiversity deep dive, climate change targets and matters relating to social justice and inequalities for instance) could help steer collaborative activity as well as provide a clear focus and incentive for driving the types of ‘transformative change’ for nature that NRW wants to see.
30. As our PSB partnerships are the place where we analyse the well-being needs of local communities, these partnerships often have a depth of understanding of well-being across all dimensions. They are potentially well-placed to hold other partnerships to account (Regional Partnership Boards, Corporate Joint Committees, Climate Strategy Panel) and to use, where appropriate, our collective influence to deliver different and better things for communities.
31. Our PSB partnerships are also well placed to recognise gaps in the work between partnerships.

Wider implications

- (a) **Well-being Objectives:** This work is directly linked to our Well-being Objectives as an organisation, our commitment to Social Justice as identified in the Corporate Plan to 2030, and our general purpose as identified in the [Environment \(Wales\) Act 2016 \(legislation.gov.uk\) Acts of the National Assembly for Wales 2016 \(ANAW\)3 PART 1 General duties of public...](#)Section 5.
- (b) The “Summary Reflections” paper identifies a strong and common well-being need which relates to inequalities, poverty, and the cost-of-living crisis. The paper notes NRW’s commitments to social justice as set out in NRW’s Corporate Plan. The NRW Board may wish to consider adopting an approach which puts tackling inequality at the heart of our decision making by agreeing to embrace the [Socio-economic Duty which came into force in Wales on the 31 March 2021³](#). NRW is not currently considered a

³ ‘The Equality Act (Authorities subject to the Socio-economic Inequality Duty) (Wales) Regulations 2021’ list the following Welsh public bodies as being subject to the Duty, as they fall within the definition of a ‘relevant authority’ in section 2(6) of the Act. NRW is not currently listed.

relevant authority which is required to give regard to this duty whereas our public sector partners are.

- (c) **Finance:** Currently there is no funding allocated to this work outside of core funding agreements. All activities related to this paper fall under our general purpose, however the suggestion of NRW becoming a public body which commits to the socio-economic duty on public bodies would be in addition to existing process and is at present an un-costed consideration. However, the outcome of such a commitment does align to our existing legislative commitments under the Well-being of Future Generations Act and Corporate Plan.
- (d) **Resource implications:** Currently the majority of the resource aligned to this work sits with Place supported by the Evidence, Policy and Permitting (EPP) directorate; estimated total approximately 30 full-time equivalent (FTEs).

If NRW were to consider initiating a more transformative approach to supporting delivery of this work it would follow that there would need to be a reconsideration as to how resource is currently allocated and if additional investment could be made. If further investment in this work is desired a gap analysis of resource will be carried out and new sources of funding explored to build capacity and resource. For us to be effective, this analysis would need to consider all PSB members.

Next Steps

32. We share the “Summary Reflections” paper with other national teams, (and where appropriate national stakeholders) inviting contributions to support delivery where there is opportunity to do so.
33. We work with the Corporate Planning team to establish a Corporate Plan measure for our PSB well-being planning delivery that aims to achieve the transformative change.
34. Following a discussion by the NRW Board we scope out options for delivering SMNR which would bring existing separate strands of work together, realise efficiencies, and better enable us to deliver on our Corporate Plan ambitions.

Recommendation

35. The Board is invited to consider:

- How and where the well-being needs and opportunities of communities identified in this work might usefully inform NRW’s approaches to delivering our Corporate Plan.
- How NRW might seek to land ‘transformative change’ for nature and climate in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis; how we lead and engage for this change; how we involve others in this change.

- Where there are opportunities to adapt work areas across NRW to better support our PSB and wider partnerships in delivering well-being outcomes for local communities.
- How the NRW Board would like to ensure that this work contributes to helping Wales achieve SMNR.

Index of Annexes

Annex 1 – Summary reflections on local well-being planning in Wales (2022-2023).docx

Annex 2 – Reflections on local well-being planning 2018

Annex 3 – Summary of responses to survey of NRW PSB Practitioners

Approval / Consultation process

Approval/consultation process	Natural Resources and Well-being Strategy and Policy Team
Responsible:	Natural Resources and Well-being Strategy and Policy Team
Accountable:	NRW Board
Consulted:	Executive Team (ET), Natural Resources Management Business Group (NRMBG), Natural Resources and Well-being Integration Sub-Group (NRWISG), PSB Practitioners Network, People and Places Team Leaders, Climate and Decarbonisation team, Office of Future Generations Commissioner (OFGC), Welsh Government (WG), Calvin Jones (NRW Board Member). Depending on the option identified and the steer from ET further discussions around how this and potentially wider work is resourced will need to be undertaken.
Informed:	Operations Leadership Team (Ops LT), Operations Leadership Technical Group (Ops LTG), Integrated Coastal Management Programme (ICMP), OFGC, WG, PHW, WLGA

Summary reflections on local well-being planning in Wales (2022-23)

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Introduction

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a key responsibility on Public Services Boards (PSBs) in Wales to develop and implement Well-being Plans that align with the Act's objectives and promote the well-being of future generations.

Each PSB must prepare and publish a Local Well-being Plan every five years. These plans should set out how the board intends to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of its area by setting local objectives and steps to take to meet those objectives which will maximise the contribution made by the Board to achieving the well-being goals.

The most recent round of well-being planning (2022-2023) has now concluded with 13 Well-being Plans being published across Wales.

NRW is a statutory member of all 13 PSBs across Wales.

This paper reflects on our experience as an organisation in contributing to this most recent round of Well-being Planning and Approval. It provides a national overview of key well-being related factors which are common across the piece and provides a useful starting point for exploring how NRW as a whole organisation may like to respond to this work area in a more strategic and integrated way with key national partners.

Part 1: Summary of findings

Well-being Objectives

Key Social Environmental Economic Cultural Cross-cutting

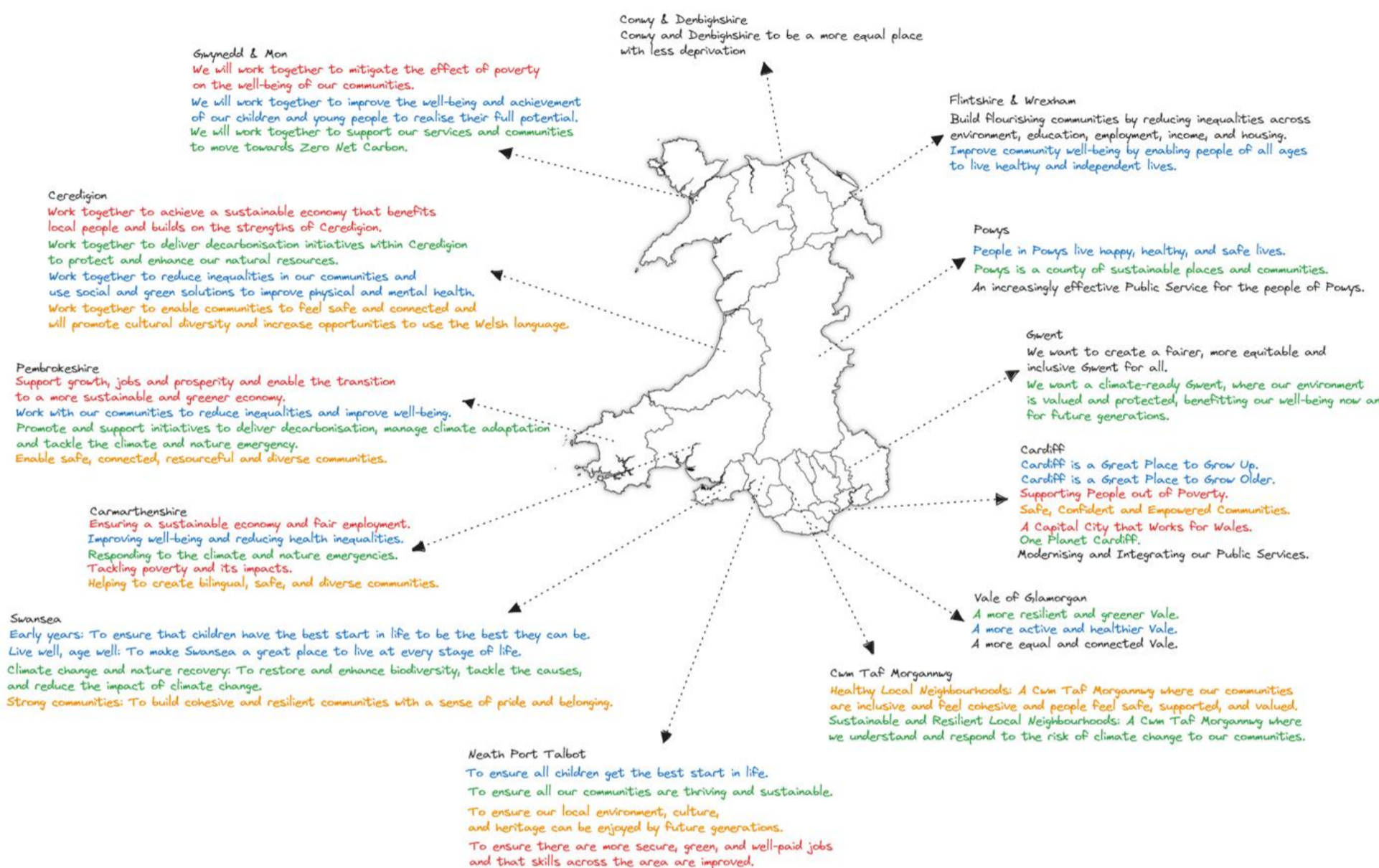


Fig 1: Distribution of Well-being Objectives across Wales



Fig 2: Data demonstrating the Increase in Environment related WBO since last round of Well-being Planning

Common challenges and opportunities

- Whilst there is clearly an ambition for our PSBs to be working together to address the Climate and Nature emergencies in partnership (Fig 1) none of them PSB are currently operating in the “Transformative Space” when it comes to addressing the Climate and Nature emergencies (as advocated by SoNaRR)
- There has been an increase in objectives relating to environmental well-being this time around (Fig 2) and a direct synergy to both our corporate plan well-being objectives and local Area Statements
- The Climate Emergency is frequently more prominent than the Nature Emergency
- All our PSBs recognise the need to act on climate risk and adaptation but many lack the capability to undertake this work

- Poverty, inequality and the cost-of-living crisis are a consistent and significant pressure on communities and public services
- There are significant gaps in policy, evidence and strategic approaches to support this work in NRW

Factors relating to Environmental Well-being

Nature Emergency

"We are likely to lose over half the species of life on Earth over the next eight decades. The last time we had an extinction event of this magnitude was 65 million years ago."

- Jeremy Rifkin Economist / Environmentalist

Common Opportunities	Common Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most plans include ambitions to 'improve biodiversity', 'protect nature' or 'improve ecosystem resilience'. • There is an opportunity to place more emphasis on people and nature to deliver multiple benefits, such as nature-based solutions for climate adaptation, connection to nature for health benefits etc. While some of our PSBs are doing this well, this is not consistent to all. • Some of our PSBs have committed to develop a 'Nature Charter', like the Active Travel Charter developed by PHW. This could set out actions for our PSBs to sign up to. NRW would be well placed to connect with the 'Team Wales' network to make this happen • There is an opportunity for our PSBs to be part of 'Team Wales' as outlined by the Minister for Climate Change, in the Biodiversity Deep Dive: Recommendations published in October 2022. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across our PSB local well-being plans, the Climate Emergency has been given greater weight than the Nature Emergency, with fewer relevant objectives and steps to take for biodiversity. In some plans, nature is considered in isolation, rather than recognising that the environment is one of the 4 integrated components of wellbeing, supporting social, cultural, and economic wellbeing objectives. • The intrinsic connection between the Climate and Nature Emergencies is not well recognised and there is a lack of understanding within our PSBs that there will be trade-offs, conflicts, and difficulties, such as land use conflicts while addressing these emergencies. • In PSB localities which have core ecological features such as National Parks, AONBs, SSSIs, NNRs etc, we are missing opportunities for multiple benefits to be optimised. • The plans identify incremental rather than transformational approaches, meaning that the actual causes of biodiversity loss are often not addressed and targeting nature is in a recovering state by 2030 is largely absent. • Equal access to nature is not always being considered.

Example Strategic Approaches which could support delivery in this area:

Common methodology: Development of a Nature Charter for Public Sector bodies to adopt with key targets for biodiversity positive actions which also incorporate deep dive recommendations. There is an opportunity to adopt a strategy created based on PhD research, called 'Wild Pathways' to enhance network partners' capacity to collaborate. By: Combining the key strategies (principles they use to design projects) of multiple partner organisations, motivating mutual accountability, creating mutual benefits, and building community assets.

Evidence: Improve access to integrated spatial evidence for nature-based solutions linked to well-being needs of communities

Governance and Policy: Future SFS to better enable delivery of nature-based solutions based on well-being demand

Partnership: Work with NGOs to improve access to habitat management advice and guidance for partners acting outside of the designated sites area

Climate Risk

"Climate change is no longer a distant threat; it is here, it is happening now, and it is affecting every region on Earth."

- António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations

Common Opportunities	Common Challenges
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of our PSBs recognise the importance of responding to climate change in their WB plans. • Some of our PSBs are committing to, or already have a Climate charter, which NRW would be well placed to coordinate. • All of our PSBs have committed to completing a Local Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA). • Our PSBs provide an integrated governance and accountability framework through which aspects of local adaptation activity could be co-ordinated, monitored and delivered. • Our PSBs are a diverse public sector partnership which would be well-placed to consider and monitor the interdependencies between sector activity and the cumulative and integrated risk to current and future well-being of communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many of our fellow PSB practitioners and organisations feel they do not have the resource or expertise in place to complete the CCRA action. • Our PSBs look to NRW as the lead environment body in the partnership to provide leadership in this area • Our PSBs are at varying stages of the CCRA process, many are yet to begin • While nature-based solutions are considered in some plans, in many the opportunity to support the Nature Crisis through climate adaptation is missed. • Inequality of exposure to climate risk is not well understood, and links to poverty/ equality (which may sit in separate objectives) are often not picked up on in the plans.
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Example Strategic Approaches which could support delivery in this area:

Policy / methodology: Devise collectively a standard format for summarising local information in relation to each climate risk. Devise collectively a standard format for the recording, monitoring and reporting of identified risks for our PSBs

Evidence: Continue to develop evidence and insights on interactions between climate risks and wider social, economic, and natural systems, providing tools for partners to use which identify where natura based solutions may be effective.

Partnership: Work with partners to develop mechanisms which bring ‘lived experience’ of extreme weather events into decision making arenas. Collaborate with different organisations at the all-Wales policy level to co-create the provision of advice that will support our PSBs to understand their role in the adaptation space and how it might add value to existing activity (Sectoral / Team Wales).

Just Transition

"Addressing climate change without addressing inequality is not only morally wrong but also ineffective. We need inclusive solutions that tackle both challenges simultaneously."

- Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director of Oxfam International

Common Opportunities	Common Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As key public sector strategic partnerships, our PSBs are well placed to play a critical role in advancing the just transition by fostering collaboration, shared responsibility, and collective action • Most of our PSBs recognise the importance of responding to climate change in their WB plans • Some of our PSBs are committing to, or already have a Climate charter, which NRW would be well placed to coordinate • Just Transition is a key element of Net Zero Wales WG developing a Just Transition Framework to help steer this work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While many plans include decarbonisation actions, such as the move to EVs, and ambitions to meet net zero targets, these are incremental rather than transformational • Wales has committed to a Net Zero 2050 target, and to a public sector Net Zero by 2030 target, which is fast approaching. There is a shared ambition amongst our PSBs to meet these targets, however, that ambition is not always met with the required level of action in the wellbeing plans. • While many plans have objectives and/or steps to take around inequality, inequality around the transition to net zero has in some cases not been recognised. Some of our PSBs refer to a ‘just transition’ but may not have specified how this will be delivered. No common understanding of what a Just Transition is.

Pollution

"Humans used to be a species just like any other on earth, but we've now become so populous and so destructive that we are the single most influential creature on earth."

- Dr Niall McCann Biologist / conservationist	
Common Opportunities	Common Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air pollution and the link to emissions are identified across many plans, which use levels of nitrous oxide and particulate matter (PM10, PM2.5) in the air as an indicator. This is attributed to the transport and energy sectors, and in one case ammonia emissions causing harm to nitrogen sensitive habitat in rural areas. Actions include promotion of active travel, and 'eliminating waste and pollution through the circular economy' Common responses to water quality related problems include for example developing local integrated food systems and local food strategies, although other plans are more focused on reducing the cost of food, due to the cost-of-living crisis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wellbeing plans are very mixed in their inclusion of pollution as an environmental challenge, some have no mention at all pollution of any kind, while others have specific actions related to air and water pollution. No reference to land pollution found across any of the wellbeing plans. Some plans refer generally to water quality challenges related to pollution from nitrates and phosphates, and others specifically identify the role of intensification of agriculture in creating environmental pressures such as nutrient and sediment pollution (e.g. elevated phosphate in SAC rivers), or an increasing number of water pollution incidents.

Factors relating to Economic Well-being

Well-being economy	
<i>"Climate change is an economic issue, affecting productivity, growth, and financial stability. Ignoring it could be catastrophic for the global economy."</i>	
- Christine Lagarde, Former Managing Director of the IMF	
Common Opportunities	Common Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a significant focus on the cost-of-living crisis, which has exacerbated existing inequalities across our PSB localities There is an opportunity for NRW to help brief partners on the Wellbeing Economy concept and give some steer on what this means for our PSBs, and what can they influence A number of our PSB local well-being plans include objectives and steps around; fair employment and job creation, regenerative economy, green economy, low carbon economy, circular economy and improving the resilience of the local economy Common actions include for example, championing the living wage, poverty prevention and poverty strategy development to alleviate financial hardship. Many plans include ambitions for the creation of high value green jobs, and green skills and training for a just transition from fossil fuels In addressing the cost-of-living crisis, some new partnerships have formed, for example Food Cardiff, which looks to make fundamental changes to sourcing and production of food to keep costs down 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some plans refer to slow progress on poverty reduction, with reducing unemployment felt unevenly across populations An increase in homelessness has noted by many of our PSBs The term 'Wellbeing economy' is not found in any of our PSB wellbeing plans, even though Wales is helping to pioneer this approach and is a member of the international Wellbeing Economy Alliance. Whilst many well-being plans refer to a "sustainable and greener economy" or "sustainable local economy" there still a distinct focus on growth. Only a few well-being plans recognise the connection between biodiversity and nature and economy.
<p>Example Strategic Approaches which could support delivery in this area:</p> <p>Our PSBs may need more support unlocking mechanisms which would better enable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More localised Food production and consumption Common definition of sustainable food and associated indicators Localised procurement opportunities 	

- Localised green skills development
- Sourcing of energy from waste
- Incentivising reduced use of packaging
- Incentivisation of active travel networks

Factors relating to Social Well-being

Wider determinants of health	
Common Opportunities	Common Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of our PSB wellbeing plans acknowledge the importance of the wider determinants of health for healthy communities. This covers areas such as housing, income, employment, social connection and community engagement in sports and cultural activities • Actions focus around enabling a healthy lifestyle, such as providing opportunities for active travel and aim to address inequality through equitable action • Some PBSs have signed up to a healthy travel charter • Many support the 'healthy weight, healthy Wales programme', and have a focus on early years • In some of our PSBs there is a move to a social model for health and wellbeing, many have an emphasis on preventative action • There are interconnections with addressing the climate and nature crisis, such as employment through the green economy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the role of health in the nature crisis is only partially understood, some, but not all of our PSBs recognise climate related health risks, such as from air pollution, heatwaves, floods etc
<p>Example Strategic Approaches which could support delivery in this area:</p> <p>Our PSBs may need support unlocking mechanisms which would better enable;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More energy efficient homes - Use of Green Infrastructure in Urban Planning - Green prescribing - Incentivising Active Travel 	

Factors relating to Cultural Well-being

<i>"I think calling it climate change is rather limiting. I would rather call it the everything change."</i>	
- Margaret Atwood	
Common Opportunities	Common Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity is celebrated in wellbeing plans • there is a strong emphasis throughout all plans on supporting a thriving Welsh language • Most WB plans recognise natural landscape features as part of the unique culture of that area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges are highlighted in the plans around balancing the importance of the tourism sector with the health of designated sites (including world heritage sites). • The importance of access to cultural actives for health is recognised in some plans, and it is noted that this has historically been underfunded, this includes art events, access to heritage sites and activities etc

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several plans refer to the importance of historical buildings and include actions to provide opportunities to use these to promote engagement with the arts • Some plans include actions around providing intergenerational opportunities across life stages to build a cohesive culture • The importance of sport, and access to sports activities is given cultural significance, particularly for the capital. 	
<p>Example Strategic Approaches which could support delivery in this area:</p> <p>Our PSBs may need support unlocking mechanisms which would better enable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use and access of greenspace - Sustainable tourism - Place making and use of green infrastructure 	

Factors relating to Ways of Working

A number of our PSBs in this round of planning have committed the first year of their delivery to further developing the steps to take for the activity identified in their Well-being Plans. In terms of resource, other than the minimal funding which each our PSBs receive from WG to undertake admin related activity, no PSB has a central budget of any kind. There are also barriers to sharing resource between PSB organisations. Research (Mercer, 2022) found that cross organisational roles are beneficial for wellbeing plan delivery for multiple benefit, however implementation in place is very challenging. Internal processes and funding structures make this way of working very difficult.

Collaboration

The effectiveness of these key strategic partnerships is mixed across the piece with some partnerships having a more “mature” and well-developed sense of partnership and collaboration. NRW PSB Practitioners recently (July 2022) self-assessed the perceived “effectiveness” of our partnership working qualitatively at a recent PSB Practitioners session. Using a scale which rated from individual effort (like an individual sprint race), co-ordinated effort (like a rowing boat with a number of rowers), synchronised effort (relay race) to disseminated effort (like an ecosystem). Using this approach our PSBs were assessed to be on the developing side of the scale, with only some synchronised but none truly disseminated.

Several common challenges have been identified, including regional working, resource for the partnership and barriers to collaborative working. Several of our PSBs have recently merged into regional PSBs. PSB practitioners have found that this can lead to duplication of effort and dilution of NRW input at a bigger board table.

Recent research in Wales (Woodcock, 2022) identified multiple constraints on the capacity of network partners to act collaboratively on joint plans; limited knowledge-sharing across specialist organisations, restrictive hierarchical management practices, a lack of managers’ time to work with other partners, and a lack of skills to work with the local community. This research has shown that our PSBs risk not taking collaborative action on their well-being plans due to a culture of hierarchy, specialisation and managerial accountability. The research demonstrated that Action Research (a participatory form of learning through joint action) can help our PSBs to build the capacity to negotiate joint well-being objectives and motivate immediate action. Our PSBs could use action research practices to: enhance dialogue (open discussion and mutual understanding), create ‘heterarchy’ (horizontal decision-making and shared power) and improve stakeholder inclusion (diverse involvement in well-being plans and action). There is an opportunity to adopt a strategy based on this research, called ‘Wild Pathways’ to enhance network partners’ capacity to collaborate. By: Combining the key strategies (principles they use to design projects) of multiple partner organisations, motivating mutual accountability, creating mutual benefits, and building community assets.

Integration

There is often a lack of clarity among our PSBs on what their purpose is, and how they fit in the complexity of existing partnerships (PSB, RPB, CJC, CSP). As our PSB partnerships are the place where we analyse the well-being needs of local communities these partnerships often have a depth of understanding of well-being across all dimensions. They are potentially well-placed to hold other partnerships to account and using where appropriate our collective influence to deliver different and better things for communities. Our PSB partnerships are also well placed to recognise gaps in the work between partnerships.

Systems approaches, as recommended in SoNaRR require systems thinking from leadership. While there are pockets of this taking place, we are not seeing the scale of ambition required, or appetite for transformative change in current wellbeing plans. Our PSBs are beginning to recognise the importance of systems thinking, but not necessarily working in this way. PHW do this well, for example in their wider determinants of health work, there is an opportunity to share best practice here.

Long term

During the Wellbeing Planning Process, NRW made an offer to all our PSBs to support long-term thinking through the delivery of a 3 Horizons workshop. Every PSB was offered this. 5 of our PSBs took up this offer, including VoG, CTM, Swansea and Neath Port Talbot. Areas of focus included the future of the cost of living and creating safe and resilient communities. Conwy and Denbighshire also took up this offer of futures support, and as they were at a later stage of the planning process, this workshop was delivered using a ‘pre-mortem’ method to focus on delivery and actions. NRW’s Integrated Evidence Group provided this support and continue to advise on futures thinking in our PSBs when required.

Part 2: Response Analysis

The Opportunity

“Everything around us is collapsing, this is the planet that we’re handing over to future generations and the worst part, I’ll tell you the worst part to me is that they are going to turn around and be like why did you not do something when you had the chance?”

Dr. Asha de Vos Marine biologist / Conservationist

[SoNaRR2020](#) concluded that Wales is not yet achieving the four long-term aims of Sustainable Management. Unsurprisingly, local assessments of Environmental Well-being draw similar conclusions. Locally and nationally our iconic species are predicted to become extinct in the next couple of decades, the resilience of our ecosystems is in decline. Globally, one million species are threatened with extinction, communities are exposed to environmental hazards and economic activity takes place at the expense of the environment.

In order to live within environmental limits, profound changes are needed (EEA, 2019a¹). For Welsh public, private and third sectors to leverage change to tackle the nature and climate emergencies, we will need to focus on the systems that support everyday life. The Well-being of Future Generations Act provides the framework to deliver integrated change across society, economy and the environment. To look at how this can be done we have looked at delivering environmental change through the social, economic and ecosystem spheres.²

“Transformation” for our PSB partnerships described as a fundamental, sustained change of a system that disrupts established high carbon nature negative practices and contributes to a zero-carbon nature positive society in line with Net Zero Wales, Prosperity for All, the Biodiversity Deep Dive recommendations, and the Welsh Well-being Goals.

Our statutory position on all Public Services Boards, as well as the permissions granted through the WFG Act represent a strategic opportunity for NRW to focus on interventions in the social, economic and cultural spheres which may leverage change in society that enables more Sustainable Management options to be realised. Achieving Sustainable Management is not something which NRW or the Welsh Government can do alone, it is a challenge for the whole of society. It is only by working across the public, private and third sectors that the wider determinants of SMNR can be used to leverage the change needed to address the nature and climate emergencies.

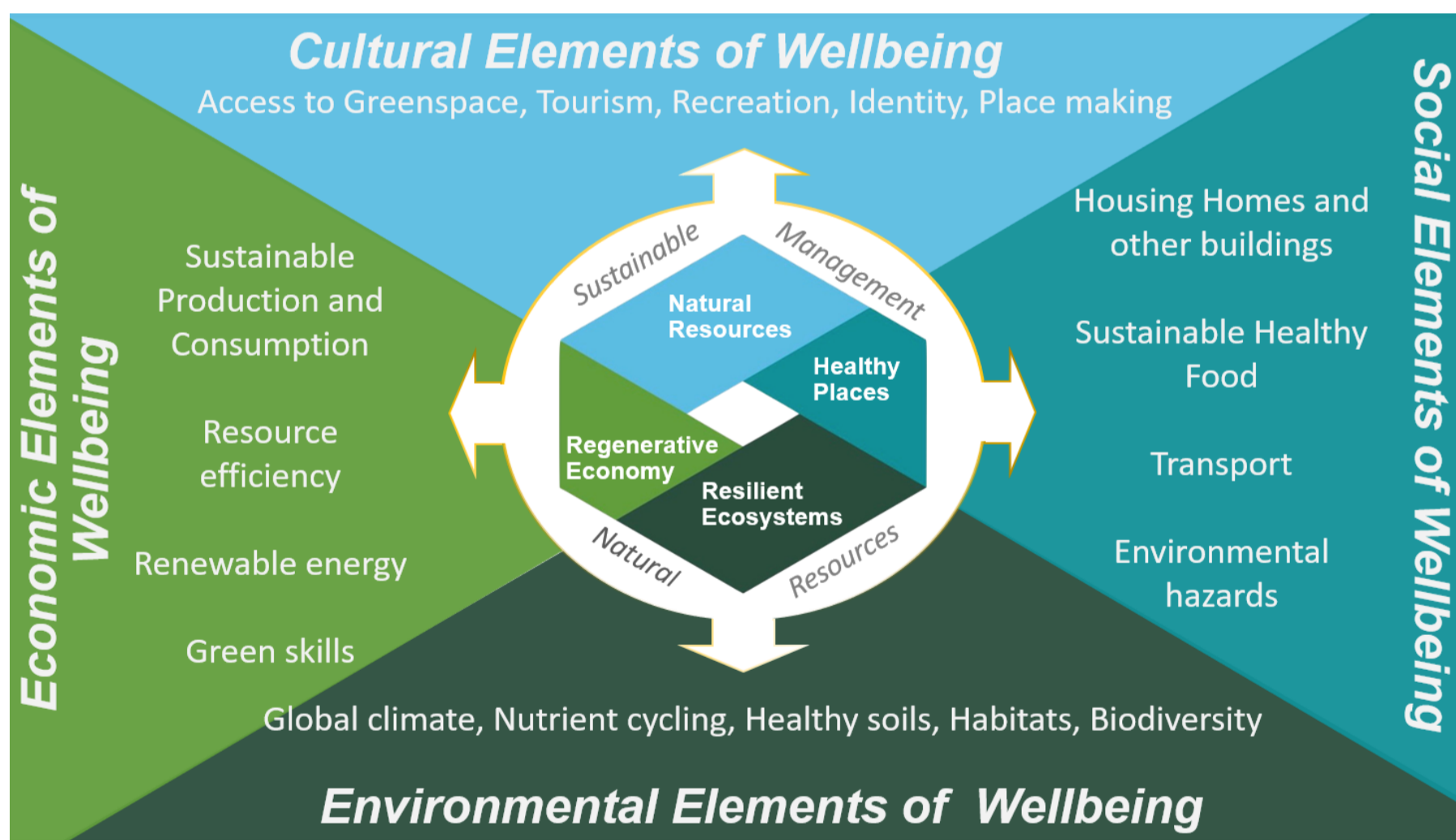


Fig 3: SMNR and the wider determinants of environmental well-being

Addressing the wider determinants of Sustainable Management (Fig 3) will require a comprehensive approach that involves multiple sectors, including food, energy, transport, public services and public policy. Public Services Boards provide a statutory platform through which we can explore new ways of working in step with our key strategic partners.

More details on the links between Well-being and Sustainable Management can be found in appendix 16.

¹ European Environmental Agency (EEA). 2019a. The European environment – state and outlook 2020. Copenhagen: European Environment Agency. Available from: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/soer-2020> [Accessed December 2020]

² [SoNaRR2020 Executive Summary \(cyfoethnaturiol.cymru\)](#)

Why take a strategic approach?

To tackle the nature and climate emergencies, the UN say we need to rapidly transform technical, political, social, cultural and economic elements of systems as diverse as food, energy, construction and industry. Humanity has not attempted such a radical change before. The scale and pace that the UN say is needed, combined with the local, regional, national and global connections and dependencies within the systems we need to transform, makes it clear a strategic approach is needed. Such an approach can build on the best international and national research on identifying the best leverage points to engage transformative change. It can then combine this knowledge with local stakeholders' views on where best to act locally. Only a combination of national and local perspectives will give a full view of where action will make most difference. This will avoid wasted effort resulting from a lack of knowledge of the national and global drivers which can push against local efforts if not taken onboard.

What does “transformation” mean in the for our PSBs?

How is NRW going to help Wales achieve the sustainable management of natural resources? How are we going to help Wales build a regenerative model of development to replace the degenerative system generating the triple global crises? The Well-being of Future Generations and Environment Acts provide us with the building blocks to make a strategic response. Our general purpose, to help Wales achieve the sustainable management of natural resources, requires us to look beyond our traditional discreet regulatory mechanisms and take a broader look at more systemic solutions. Our statutory role on all Public Service Boards across Wales provides, permission and opportunity to explore different interventions with partners. We know that the social, cultural and economic dimensions of well-being are having the biggest negative impact on our natural resources. Our PSB partnerships are the key collaborative institutions through which NRW could pursue joint enterprises with key partners which will address the climate and nature emergencies.

The following table identifies key areas where NRW as a whole organisation may like to promote and work towards supporting transformation in the partnership setting and maps opportunities against the Well-being Objectives set out in NRW's Corporate Plan.

Resilience to Climate Change				
3	Nature's Recovery	Mitigation		Minimising Pollution
			Adaptation	
Necessary but insufficient to deliver systems change	Conservation and restoration programmes to protect and enhance local ecosystems. This can include reforestation efforts, preserving wetlands, creating wildlife corridors, and protecting endangered species.	Facilitating the installation of renewable energy systems both in public facilities and in the community. Promoting public transport and encouraging the use of electric vehicles.	Responding to and preparing for the impacts of Climate Change sector by sector	The existing regulatory and legislative framework for the management of chemicals must be comprehensively implemented
Incremental measures which can help in building transformative change	Expanding protected area networks, interconnected and better managed to conserve biodiversity. Education and awareness campaigns about the importance of biodiversity and conservation. These measures will build towards but not deliver transformation	Reducing energy consumption and implementing energy efficiency measures and the development of active travel options.	Adaptation that maintains the essence and integrity of a system or process at a given scale. e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved Infrastructure e.g. improved agricultural irrigations systems to cope with drought Flood protection and safeguarding of fresh water supply 	Innovative Science-based approaches to the sound management of chemicals. Multi-stakeholder partnerships helping to protect human health and the environment from the adverse effects of chemicals and waste.
Transformative measures which deliver systems change	To address the drivers of biodiversity loss, transformative actions must necessarily occur mostly outside of protected areas e.g.:	A rapid transition to low-carbon systems in both the production and use of energy, including redesigned transport systems - requiring strategically planned changes to urban energy	Deep systemic change that requires reconfiguration of social and ecological systems e.g.	Innovation and new business models helping to reduce global and local chemical pollution and waste and the shift to a circular economy

³ Measures adapted from literature including UN Making Peace with Nature and European Environment Agency The European State and Outlook 2020

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional planning to mainstream biodiversity, and ecological restoration, • Land use planning to prioritise green infrastructure • Incorporating nature-based solutions into urban design e.g. promoting green roofs & walls & integrating green spaces & SUDS into urban areas. <p>Sustainable Procurement: sourcing products and services that minimize harm to the environment and promote sustainable practices.</p>	and transport infrastructure, eg reducing energy use and the need to travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative lifestyles and employment • Changes to farming such as diversifying crops, strengthening links to market • New types of planning that safeguards people and infrastructure 	
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Appendices

Appendix 1: [Well-being Planning Framework for Approval \(Well-being Assessments\)](#)

Appendix 2: [Well-being Planning Framework for Approval \(Well-being Plans\)](#)

Appendix 3: [The story of well-being planning Cardiff](#)

Appendix 4: [The story of well-being planning Carmarthenshire](#)

Appendix 5: [The story of well-being planning Ceredigion](#)

Appendix 6: [The story of well-being planning Conwy & Denbighshire](#)

Appendix 7: [The story of well-being planning Cwm Taf Morgannwg](#)

Appendix 8: [The story of well-being planning Flintshire & Wrexham](#)

Appendix 9: [The story of well-being planning Gwent](#)

Appendix 10: [The story of well-being planning Gwynedd & Mon](#)

Appendix 11: [The story of well-being planning Neath Port Talbot](#)

Appendix 12: [The story of well-being planning Pembrokeshire](#)

Appendix 13: [The story of well-being planning Powys](#)

Appendix 14: [The story of well-being planning Swansea](#)

Appendix 15: [The story of well-being planning Vale of Glamorgan](#)

Appendix 16: [SMNR and Well-being .docx](#)

Headline messages

The wellbeing plans should articulate the collective ambition of the PSBs with regards rising to the challenges faced by a 21st century Wales. These plans **should set the bar** with regards ambition, innovation, creativity, inquiry, and effective delivery.

There is a current gap between board aspiration and ambition and what seems to be possible at the PSB level, despite the good work of NRW staff and other PSB members involved. Managing this tension effectively and not distancing the Board from the reality of PSB operation is paramount

Whilst, on the whole, the link between the well-being assessments and the wellbeing objectives are being made, the emerging objectives are pedestrian as responses to the assessment. PSBs could respond to the issues in a more integrated way, with many shoe-horning old thinking into a new process.

Accepting that we are in an imperfect place in this round of planning, our focus has to be on ensuring shorter term measures do not compromise longer term ambition, and shifting mindsets such that the work of PSBs becomes the model for **the way we do business rather than just the platform for plan creation.**

We must commit to

- a) developing NRW staff as change agents such that their deployment as PSB members can effect meaningful change through real collaboration
- b) supporting all PSB members to operate in a more co-productive, collaborative way
- c) Defining aspirations on the basis of best examples worldwide, not personal beliefs and values
- d) Working with the Commissioner to overcome the challenges

This round of plans are not going to be adequate to resolve the problems we face. They need to be considered as a step in the right direction – a learning experience that takes us forward. My current feeling is that those we have seen can only be signed off in this context, and **with the caveat** that we commit to supporting our staff through the development that is required to really make the changes that are needed, and take a lead on raising the bar with regards organisational cultural maturity such that collaboration can become really effective.

Howard Davies

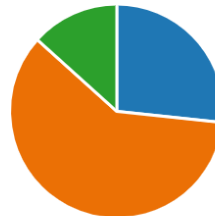
Summary of responses to survey of NRW PSB Practitioners

PSB Well-being Plan Delivery

15 Responses 08:33 Average time to complete Active Status

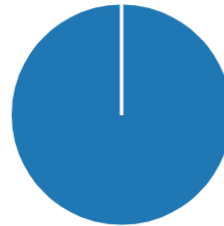
1. What best describes your role?

● PSB Lead rep	4
● PSB Practitioner (place)	9
● PSB Practitioner (national)	2



2. The paper "Summary reflections on local well-being planning" has identified that whilst our PSBs are open to addressing the climate and nature emergencies through partnership working, we are not yet in the "transformational space" when it comes to initiating clear opportunities for collaborative interventions with our partners which will address the root cause of issues. Do you agree with this finding?

● Yes	15
● No	0



3. As the lead environmental body for Wales and the partner advocating for systems approaches to addressing the climate and nature emergencies, is it fair to say that our partners around the PSB table expect us to provide leadership and opportunity for collaborative work in this area?

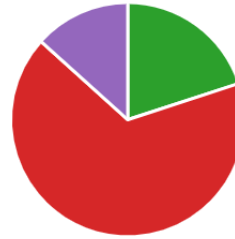
● Yes	14
● No	1



Summary of responses to survey of NRW PSB Practitioners

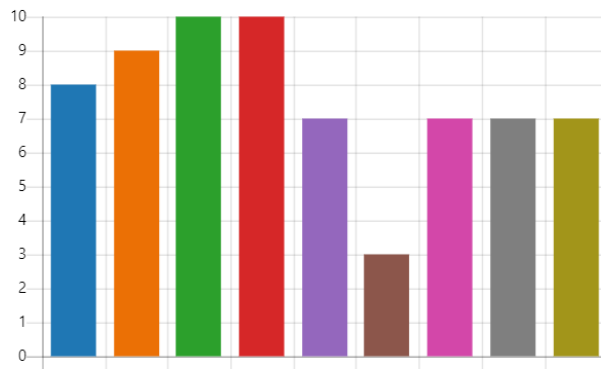
4. How confident are you as an NRW PSB rep that you are able to provide the required level of support to progress activity on **climate resilience** within your PSB?

● Extremely confident	0
● Fairly confident	0
● Neutral	3
● Lacking confidence	10
● Not at all confident	2



5. If you answered 'lacking confidence' or 'not at all confident', why is this? (Please select all that apply)

● Lack of evidence to use and s...	8
● Lack of policy integration	9
● Lack of guidance available fro...	10
● Lack of funding	10
● Lack of staff time	7
● Lack of engagement with stak...	3
● Lack of skills or capability in th...	7
● Lack of leadership and coordi...	7
● Lack of mechanisms for delivery	7



6. How confident are you as an NRW PSB rep that you are able to provide the required level of support to progress activity on **nature recovery** within your PSB?

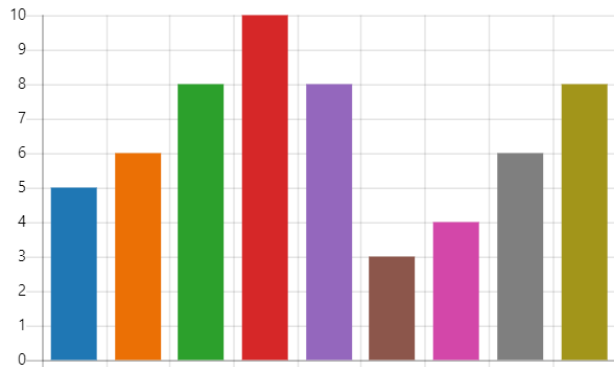
● Extremely confident	1
● Fairly confident	0
● Neutral	2
● Lacking confidence	11
● Not at all confident	1



Summary of responses to survey of NRW PSB Practitioners

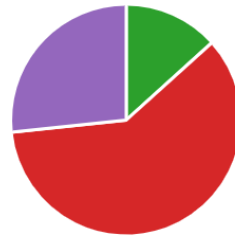
7. If you answered 'lacking confidence' or 'not at all confident', why is this? (Please select all that apply)

- Lack of evidence to use and s... 5
- Lack of policy integration 6
- Lack of guidance available fro... 8
- Lack of funding 10
- Lack of staff time 8
- Lack of engagement with stak... 3
- Lack of skills or capability in th... 4
- Lack of leadership and coordi... 6
- Lack of mechanisms for delivery 8



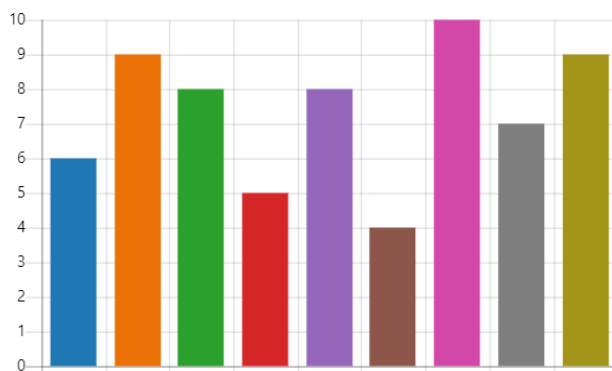
8. How confident are you as an NRW PSB rep that you are able to provide the required level of support to progress activity on **systems transformation** within your PSB?

- Extremely confident 0
- Fairly confident 0
- Neutral 2
- Lacking confidence 9
- Not at all confident 4



9. If you answered 'lacking confidence' or 'not at all confident', why is this? (Please select all that apply)

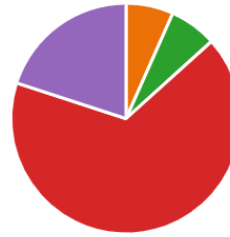
- Lack of evidence to use and s... 6
- Lack of policy integration 9
- Lack of guidance available fro... 8
- Lack of funding 5
- Lack of staff time 8
- Lack of engagement with stak... 4
- Lack of skills or capability in th... 10
- Lack of leadership and coordi... 7
- Lack of mechanisms for delivery 9



Summary of responses to survey of NRW PSB Practitioners

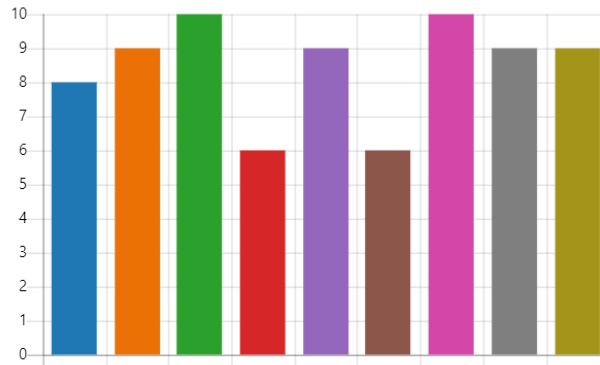
10. How confident are you as an NRW PSB rep that you are able to provide the required level of support to progress activity on the **well-being economy** within your PSB?

● Extremely confident	0
● Fairly confident	1
● Neutral	1
● Lacking confidence	10
● Not at all confident	3



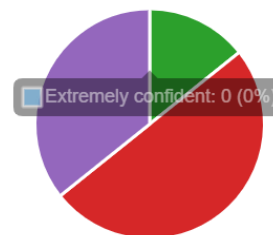
11. If you answered 'lacking confidence' or 'not at all confident', why is this? (Please select all that apply)

● Lack of evidence to use and s...	8
● Lack of policy integration	9
● Lack of guidance available fro...	10
● Lack of funding	6
● Lack of staff time	9
● Lack of engagement with stak...	6
● Lack of skills or capability in th...	10
● Lack of leadership and coordi...	9
● Lack of mechanisms for delivery	9



12. How confident are you as an NRW PSB rep that you are able to provide the required level of support to progress activity on a **just transition** within your PSB?

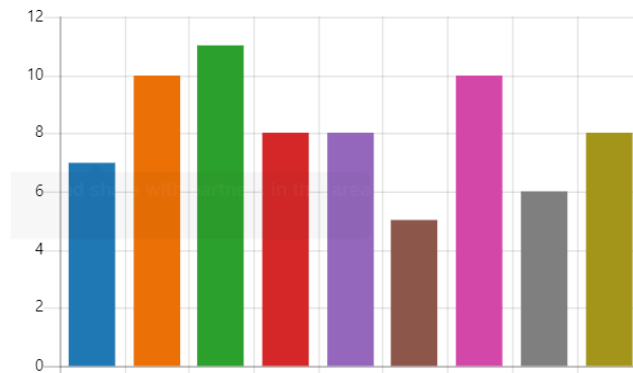
● Extremely confident	0
● Fairly confident	0
● Neutral	2
● Lacking confidence	7
● Not at all confident	5



Summary of responses to survey of NRW PSB Practitioners

13. If you answered 'lacking confidence' or 'not at all confident', why is this? (Please select all that apply)

- Lack of evidence to use and s... 7
- Lack of policy integration 10
- Lack of guidance available fro... 11
- Lack of funding 8
- Lack of staff time 8
- Lack of engagement with stak... 5
- Lack of skills or capability in th... 10
- Lack of leadership and coordi... 6
- Lack of mechanisms for delivery 8



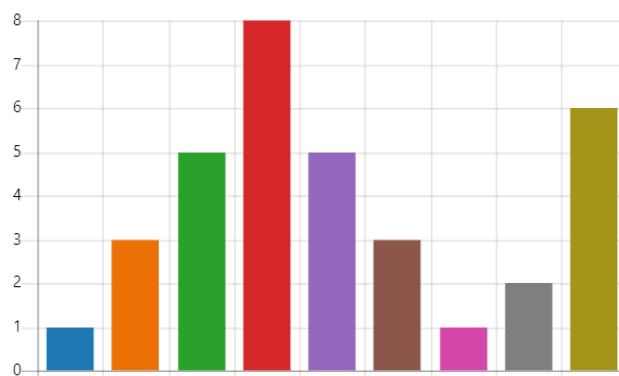
14. How confident are you as an NRW PSB rep that you are able to provide the required level of support to progress activity on **use of nature-based solutions** within your PSB?

- Extremely confident 1
- Fairly confident 6
- Neutral 3
- Lacking confidence 5
- Not at all confident 0



15. If you answered 'lacking confidence' or 'not at all confident', why is this? (Please select all that apply)

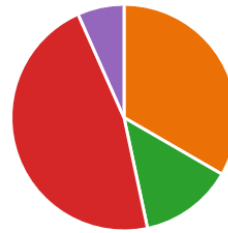
- Lack of evidence to use and s... 1
- Lack of policy integration 3
- Lack of guidance available fro... 5
- Lack of funding 8
- Lack of staff time 5
- Lack of engagement with stak... 3
- Lack of skills or capability in th... 1
- Lack of leadership and coordi... 2
- Lack of mechanisms for delivery 6



Summary of responses to survey of NRW PSB Practitioners

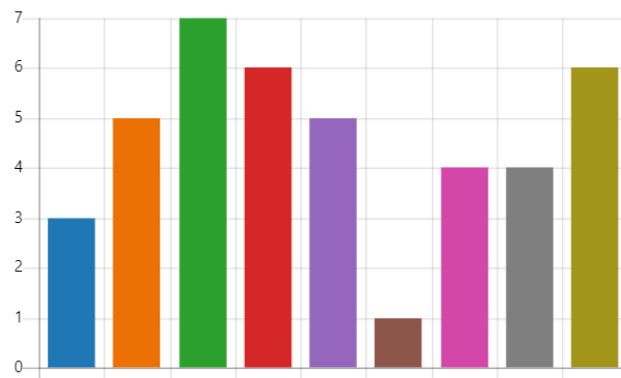
16. How confident are you as an NRW PSB rep that you are able to provide the required level of support to progress activity on the **wider determinants of health** within your PSB?

● Extremely confident	0
● Fairly confident	5
● Neutral	2
● Lacking confidence	7
● Not at all confident	1



17. If you answered 'lacking confidence' or 'not at all confident', why is this? (Please select all that apply)

● Lack of evidence to use and s...	3
● Lack of policy integration	5
● Lack of guidance available fro...	7
● Lack of funding	6
● Lack of staff time	5
● Lack of engagement with stak...	1
● Lack of skills or capability in th...	4
● Lack of leadership and coordi...	4
● Lack of mechanisms for delivery	6



18. How confident are you as an NRW PSB rep that you are able to provide the required level of support to progress activity on **addressing inequalities** within your PSB?

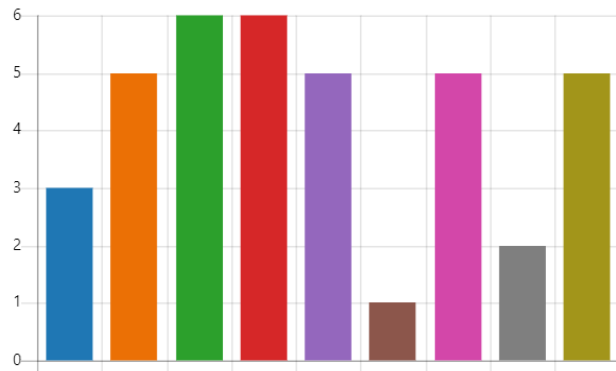
● Extremely confident	0
● Fairly confident	4
● Neutral	4
● Lacking confidence	7
● Not at all confident	0



Summary of responses to survey of NRW PSB Practitioners

19. If you answered 'lacking confidence' or 'not at all confident', why is this? (Please select all that apply)

- Lack of evidence to use and s... 3
- Lack of policy integration 5
- Lack of guidance available fro... 6
- Lack of funding 6
- Lack of staff time 5
- Lack of engagement with stak... 1
- Lack of skills or capability in th... 5
- Lack of leadership and coordi... 2
- Lack of mechanisms for delivery 5



Board Forward Look – September						
	Item	Private/ Public	Scope	Purpose	Time	Sponsor
1	Open meeting	Public and Private	Standing Item		5	Chair
2	Review Minutes	Public and Private	Standing Item		10	Chair
3	Chair's Update	Public and Private	Standing Item		10	Chair
4	CEO Update	Public and Private	Standing Item		30	Clare Pillman
5	Committee Updates	Public and Private	Standing Item		20	Chairs of Committees
6	Financial Approvals	Private	Approval	Approval of the latest financial items	15	Rachael Cunningham
7	Annual Report and Accounts	Private	Approval	To approve the Annual Report and Accounts	10	Rachael Cunningham Prys Davies
8	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Annual Report	Private	Approval	To approve the ARAC Annual Report	5	Rachael Cunningham
9	Annual Review of Charges	Private	Approval	To approve the consultation on the Annual Review of Charges	30	Ceri Davies
10	Strategic Session on Wellbeing Objective 3 – Pollution is minimised	Private	Approval	Strategic Discussion / Workshop sessions	Day 1	Gareth O'Shea
11	Aspirations of the State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR) 2025	Private	Discussion	To discuss the aspirations of SoNaRR	45 Day 1	Ceri Davies
12	Finance Report	Public	Approval/ Discussion	To review and update on financial performance	15	Rachael Cunningham
13	Business Plan Performance Dashboard Quarter 1 Report	Public	Scrutiny	To scrutinise the Business Plan Performance Dashboard Q1 Report	20	Clare Pillman
14	Wellbeing, Health and Safety Quarter 1 Report	Public	Scrutiny	To scrutinise the Wellbeing, Health and Safety Q1 Report	15	Prys Davies

Board Forward Look – September						
	Item	Private/ Public	Scope	Purpose	Time	Sponsor
15	Gamebird Release Regulation	Public	Approval	To approve the licensing approach for regulating gamebird release in Wales	30	Ceri Davies
16	Modern Slavery Statement	Public	Approval	To approve the Modern Slavery Statement	5	Prys Davies
17	AOB	Public and Private	Discussion		5	Chair
18	Interactive Q&A Session with Public	Public	Standing Item	To provide an opportunity for the public to speak to the Board	25	Chair