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**NOTES OF THE AUTUMN MEETING OF THE WOOD RECYCLERS' ASSOCIATION,
 WEDNESDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER, THE HILTON BIRMINGHAM METROPOLE**

Board members present	Andy Hill	Andy Hill Consultancy	Chair
	Paul Caldwell	IQR	
	Richard Coulson	RWE	Deputy Chair
	Geoff Hadfield	Hadfield Wood Recyclers	
	Mark Hayton	Timberpak/Egger	
	Jamie Plevin	R Plevin & Sons	
	Julia Turner	WRA	Executive Director
Advisers to the WRA	Gayle Whittaker	WRA Communications	
Presenters	Howard Leberman	Environment Agency	
	Colin Church	CIWM	

**And a record 79 members and guests representing 48 companies and organisations.
 (See attached attendee list)**

Welcome and Introduction

Andy Hill welcomed everyone, particularly our new members and guests (see slides). He explained that this would be a short meeting to allow everyone to go over to the RWM exhibition afterwards and that the focus would be on our two guest speakers, Howard Leberman from the Environment Agency giving an update on regulatory issues affecting our sector and Colin Church from the Chartered Institute of Waste Management giving an overview of the impact of the EU's Circular Economy Package, BREXIT and the forthcoming UK Resources and Waste Strategy and what they may mean for the waste wood sector.

Board Update

Andy reported back from the Board Meeting which had taken place the day before and showed the agenda items that had been discussed (see slides) He gave an overview of the Quarterly Financial Report and a summary of the main things covered (see slides):

- The Surplus for the year to end July 2018 was £9,710 (£11,073 Budget) – less than forecast due to members taking a long time to pay membership fees. He urged members to pay their invoices within 30 days to avoid time being waste chasing these.
- There was £42,379 in the Reserve Account, but some of this will be used to fund WWC work

- He explained that the WRA would have to adopt Trade Association status as it could not prove Mutual Trading with its members. This would mean that in future members would not be able to claim membership as a business expense, but they would be able to reclaim the VAT.

WRA Activity and Communications Update

Julia talked through her activity and stakeholder engagement over the last quarter focusing on the highlights covered in the attached slides.

She reported that membership had increased again with 6 more new members and our first Australian Member!

The focus for the next quarter will be on finalising the Waste wood FPP template and on commencing testing/sampling work for the Waste Wood Classification project as well as starting to scope out work on dust/explosions with HSE.

Gayle gave the communications update, giving an overview of media coverage since June and what the focus would be for the next quarter. She also reminded members of both the free and paid for marketing opportunities which were available.

Technical Update

Vicki Hughes gave an update on the key technical issues the industry was facing. (see attached slides)

On FPP, we are now finalising our waste wood specific FPP guidance and should have this signed off by the end of October. She reminded members that they would still need to prepare detailed information on their site specifics, but this guidance should give a great deal of help to wood recyclers preparing Fire Prevention Plans.

On Waste Wood Classification, there has been a slight delay from the EA to commence the sampling work, so the RPS will need to be extended. The initial assessment of mixed waste wood was still showing less than 0.1% as hazardous.

On Clean Air Strategy, Vicki said that the WRA response to the consultation had highlighted the confusion caused by linking the burning of wood domestically with commercially compliant biomass and confirmed that the WRA position was that only clean, untreated pre-consumer waste wood or suitably dried virgin wood should be burnt in non-WID compliant boilers and clean wood should only be burnt in modern burners or boilers, where flues were cleaned out regularly.

Regulatory Update

Howard Leberman from the EA gave an update on the key regulatory Issues affecting the UK Waste Wood Sector.

FPP – Howard reported that there had been a step change since he last presented at our meeting with the appointment of Peter Buckley, a specialist with over 30 years' experience in the fire service and specifically with waste fires now working in Howard's team. Peter has developed a network within the EA of all those working on FPP and they share best practice from across England. They have developed an overview of the kind of Alternative Measures

you will need to consider if you need to move away from the standard FPP guidance and this will be published internally and made available externally within the next couple of months. The FPP guidance itself will also subsequently be updated. With Peter and the network in place, there is now lots of support for industry on the ground.

From a waste wood perspective, comments on the template have been provided and most of these are editorial, with some further discussion required to get it to final sign off stage. This will happen in October.

The EA will also be working with WISH, but Howard pointed out that the WISH work is industry guidance not a legal requirement and there are no plans to adopt the wider separation distances suggested. The EA will also be working with the Institute of Fire Engineers.

Site-specific issues should go to the EA Site Officer in the first instance and, then, if required, escalations should go to the FPP Area Specialist, who will then feed into the FPP network and Peter.

Waste Wood Classification - Howard held up this work as a fantastic model of the Agency working with industry to find a solution to a problem. He said he was extremely pleased with how industry had taken on the responsibility for resolving this and had formed an excellent Technical Working Group, led by the WRA but including a range of other trade associations and organisations. Wood types and chemicals of concern have been identified and the sampling/testing work now needs to commence. He said that a very recent development had meant that wood coatings and the issue of copper carbonate needed to be reviewed and the Technical Working Group were looking at how that might affect the Sampling Plan. This delay has meant that the EA will be extending the RPS by 9 months and it will now end on 30th September 2019. The expectation is that the work will result in more waste wood being classified as hazardous, so the EA will then need to work with industry to agree where this can go. He also clarified that it will not be at the levels seen in Germany, as they can burn hazardous waste wood so haven't put in all the effort of sampling and testing waste wood items that are described as hazardous but may not be. The EA recognise that the UK has different industry drivers so a model will need to be found that works for all parties concerned.

Both Richard Coulson and Andy Hill echoed Howard's comments on how well the EA and industry has worked together on this issue and said that this should provide a template of a new way of working in the future.

Clean Air Strategy - The EA and BEIS are working closely together with policy leads at the RHI and Defra. The EA has concerns about RHI and believes it has encouraged illegal activity with the wrong wood being used for incorrect end uses. They are therefore all working together to make sure there is a joined up message on this and changes will be announced shortly which will mean that there will be a lot more scrutiny in this area.

Changes to Part B Guidance - This is now out for consultation and will have tighter restrictions to ensure that treated waste wood is only used in properly regulated boilers.

Exemptions - all of the proposals in relation to Waste Crime have now been taken on board and new documents are being produced. The T6 exemption for waste wood will change from 500 tonnes per week to 500 tonnes per year. This is likely to come in from October 2019. Howard said that he would brief Julia Turner further on this as more changes were proposed in relation to EPR.

Howard finished off by saying that all of the work in England is being shared with the other regulators across the UK.

The Impact of the EU CE Package, BREXIT and the UK Resources and Waste Strategy on the Waste Wood Industry

Andy congratulated Colin on his new role as CEO of the Institute of Materials, Minerals & Mining and said that he was glad that Colin was remaining within the industry.

As CEO of the CIWM, Colin gave an overview of some of the key things the waste wood industry is likely to see as a result of these three major developments in the UK. (See slides)

BREXIT - Colin made the point that more than half of UK legislation comes from the EU, so BREXIT is important for our industry. However, the transposition of this legislation is nearly complete and in terms of Trans Frontier Shipments, Defra and the EA are working together on this. However, businesses may need to reapply after March 2019, so issues may arise.

Policy Change in England - Michael Gove is driving real change in our industry and one of the key components is the Resources and Waste Strategy, which is likely to be finalised by the end of October/early November. Primarily this will affect England, but there will also be implications across the UK. Colin mentioned the potential for an incineration tax and said that we should keep close to this, as although Treasury are initially talking about this in relation to plastics, it could be applied more widely.

Circular Economy Package - Colin reported that the UK is planning to adopt the CEP. This will mean lots of changes in relation to plastics, but apart from that, regulation is unlikely to diverge from the EU before the early 2020s

Date and Location of Future Meetings

Wednesday 5th December – Coventry

2019 Meetings

Wednesday March 13th – venue tbc

Wednesday June 12th – venue tbc

September TBC

Wednesday December 4th – venue tbc

Close of Meeting

On behalf of the WRA Board, Andy Hill and Julia Turner thanked all of our speakers and wished everyone a good RWM.