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**NOTES OF THE SPRING MEETING AND AGM OF THE WOOD RECYCLERS' ASSOCIATION, WEDNESDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2019, THE HILTON COVENTRY HOTEL**

<b>Board members present</b>	Andy Hill Paul Caldwell Richard Coulson Geoff Hadfield Mark Hayton Jamie Plevin Julia Turner Gayle Whittaker	WRA Chair IQR RWE and WRA Deputy Chair Hadfield Wood Recyclers Timberpak/Egger R Plevin & Sons WRA Executive Director WRA Communications Lead
<b>Apologies</b>	Clem Spencer	Wood Yew Waste
<b>Advisers to the WRA</b>	Vicki Hughes	WRA Technical Committee
<b>Presenters</b>	Howard Leberman Tim Johnson	Environment Agency HSE

**And 71 members and guests representing 53 companies and organisations. (See attached attendee list)**

### **Welcome and Introduction**

Andy Hill welcomed those present, particularly our new members and guests (see slides) and reminded everyone that voting for the 2019 board elections was now closed. He asked everyone to sign into the meeting and to ensure that they were happy to sign up to the Competition Law Guidance printed on the reverse of the sign-in sheet. Andy also wished Malcolm Green all the best on his retirement from A&A Recycling after 40 years in the waste sector and thanked him for his contribution over the last 10 years to the waste wood industry.

### **AGM and Board Update**

Andy gave an overview of the draft set of accounts for the WRA for 2018, showing turnover of £103,736 and expenditure of £103,309 with a net surplus after finance costs and depreciation of £53. He explained that this was lower than the net surplus achieved in 2017, which was £59,972, but, in the main, this was due to higher than usual turnover being allocated to 2017 following the new company formation for the WRA to become a limited by guarantee business.

This had resulted in deferred income of £43,692. The accounts are also based on invoices raised and received for the year, while the cash accounting position was a lot healthier with turnover of £112,155, expenditure of £103,575 with a surplus of £8,580.

Andy also showed the approved 2019 WRA budget and reported back from the Board Meeting which had taken place the day before, talking through 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 accounts for the 13 months to the end of January showed a healthy position.
- The Board agreed that a longer membership cancellation period should be introduced, so that members would have to give 3 months' notice in writing if they want to leave the Association. The Rules of Association would be updated accordingly

### **WRA Activity and Communications Update**

Julia Turner gave an overview of her activity over the last quarter (see attached slides) and reminded Members that there was currently an open consultation on Extended Producer Responsibility which talks about options for future governance of the PRN system and future waste wood packaging targets. See [here](#). The consultation response is due by 13<sup>th</sup> May and Julia will be circulating a proposed WRA-wide response to members. She also urged members to respond directly.

She asked the 13 waste wood processors who still hadn't returned their 2018 waste wood statistics to send them to her by the end of the week, reassuring members that these figures will only ever be used in an amalgamated form but reminding them that it is a condition of membership that these statistics are provided and that the WRA can't claim to represent the industry if it can't provide accurate market information.

Gayle Whittaker gave a communications update for the last quarter, focusing on the highlights covered in the attached slides.

She also talked about plans to increase engagement with MPs and asked any members interested in this to get in touch with her.

### **Technical Update**

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

On FPP, general feedback from members is that things are now moving on the ground and the FRS are getting more involved in signing off final FPP versions. There are also now a team of trained Tactical Waste Fire Advisers in each region of the FRS. One of them attended the members' meeting and is interested in coming to a future meeting to present on how he thinks they can help operators on the ground. Vicki reminded members to contact Julia if they were interested in further workshops/required support or were still experiencing problems.

On Waste Wood Classification, Vicki recapped the project objectives (see slides) and reported that the sampling and testing work has now started.

The construction/demolition industry are collecting structural timbers, tiling battens and external joinery from 1950s, 60s and 70s demolition projects and these will be laboratory tested to ascertain whether they are hazardous.

If they are, in future they will have to be segregated at source. **The collection of samples has been slow as this kind of demolition work is scarce. Members were asked to let Julia know if they could help with this.**

For household waste items of potential concern – fence posts and decking - two XRF screening pilots have been undertaken and these will be tested at a laboratory so that the XRF testing protocol can be finalised. The wider household waste sampling/testing with waste wood processors, transfer stations and HWRCs will then be rolled out from early April and will go on until June. In the interim both groups will be working on a template for the guidance to be produced for the waste wood and construction and demolition industries.

On Biomass Suppliers List/RHI Guidance, Vicki reported that Julia and Richard were meeting with the BEIS Policy Advisor to drive home the WRA position of only virgin or clean un-treated pre-consumer waste wood into non IED Chapter IV boilers.

### **Update from the Environment Agency**

Howard Leberman, Senior Adviser and Wood Sector Lead at the EA, gave an overview of the key regulatory developments affecting the waste wood industry.

Firstly, Howard talked about the activity undertaken by Defra and other agencies to ensure that if there is not a deal, export and import waste movements will be able to continue as usual, even though there may be some disruption at ports.

He then went on to describe two transformative things in the pipeline. 1. The Environment Bill which will deliver an independent scrutiny panel for regulation and 2. Future changes in exemptions and both standard rules and bespoke permitting as well as the introduction of a new electronic waste tracking system.

The permit review will be the subject of a future consultation. For exemptions, the results of consultation last year were supposed to be published by now, but for various reasons have been delayed. The EA are now supporting Defra to prepare an impact assessment for the proposed changes but it is expected that the changes on exemptions will still start to be launched in October 2019. For the T6 exemption on waste wood, this will mean a reduction in treatment/storage allowance from 500 tonnes per week to 500 tonnes a year, otherwise a permit will be required.

On RHI, Howard reported that there has been lots of cross-Whitehall discussions on Air Quality and BEIS are now planning to introduce annual maintenance checks on all systems.

ON FPP, Howard praised Peter Buckley's work with industry on promoting evidence-backed information to obtain an approved FPP and on the development of an England-wide best practice network and of strong relationships with the key waste industry trade bodies such as the WRA. He mentioned that an internal EA Guide on Alternative Measures had now been produced and that in time this would be updated with more of an external focus. The EA were now looking for all sites to have an approved FPP, not just those requesting new permits or permit changes.

For WWC, Howard reiterated that it has always been a legal requirement to assess waste that could be potentially hazardous at the front end of processing, so the on-going work being led by the WRA is essential to ensure that this happens in future.

Questions – Howard was asked about the different approach to FPP in Wales linked to the WISH guidance and he confirmed that there are no plans to change the EA FPP Guidance in line with this. There was a question on how soon the T6 exemption changes would be introduced and Howard estimated that this would be around April 2020. There was also a question on whether the RPS could be extended again. Howard replied that this is possible, but the preference is for the WWC work to be completed in time for the end September deadline.

### **Results of the 2019 Elections**

Andy explained that there were currently 3 board vacancies with two board members standing for re-election and one vacancy due to the retirement of Clem Spencer from the Board. Andy took the opportunity to thank Clem for the commitment he had made to the Board over the last 10 years and offered a lifelong membership to him in recognition of the contribution he has made.

Andy confirmed that the results of the 2019 board elections had been independently verified by Emma Simpkin of CIWM and were as follows:

Geoff Hadfield – 39 votes  
Paul Caldwell – 31 votes  
Alan Webb – 24 votes  
John Droog – 23 votes

This meant that Geoff and Paul were duly re-elected and Alan was newly elected to the Board.

### **Health and Safety Update**

Tim Johnson from HSE who works in both industry engagement and policy and who is responsible for the woodworking sector, which includes waste wood processing, gave a presentation on the key areas of interest for our sector. (See attached slides). He mainly talked about the proposed lowering of the Workplace Exposure Limit (WEL) for hardwood dust and emphasised that this includes mixed hard and soft wood. The limit was lowering from the current 5mg/m<sup>3</sup> to 3mg/m<sup>3</sup> in January 2020, with a further reduction in 2023 to 2mg/m<sup>3</sup>. He also explained the difference between the WEL (the maximum concentration of a hazardous substance that should be found in the air averaged over a specific time period to give a time-weighted average) and the ALARP (As low as is reasonably practicable and in any case below the WEL). He advised members that HSE Guidance will change and there will be continued inspections and enforcement. He also advised that the industry should start to act now to ensure it is in line with these changes before they become a legal requirement.

Tim also mentioned that he was moving into another area of HSE and his successor, Helen Chesworth will be taking over as Sector Lead from October of 2019.

Julia asked whether collaborative work on best practice in relation to DSEAR (Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002) could be progressed and Tim said that this would be something Helen could take forward with the WRA.

### **Date and Location of Future Meetings**

**Wednesday June 12<sup>th</sup> 2019 for Summer Members' Meeting – Middlesbrough venue tbc, followed by site tour of Enva Wood Recycling**

**Wednesday September 11<sup>th</sup> 2019 for Autumn Members' Meeting – Venue tbc, but will be close to the NEC for RWM**

**Wednesday December 4<sup>th</sup> 2019 for Winter Members' Meeting – venue tbc but will be in the Midlands**

**Please note we are looking for more potential site tour locations for 2020.**

### **Close of Meeting**

On behalf of the WRA Board, Andy Hill thanked all of our speakers and closed the meeting.