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**NOTES OF THE WINTER MEETING OF THE WOOD RECYCLERS' ASSOCIATION,  
 WEDNESDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2018, THE HILTON COVENTRY HOTEL**

<b>Board members present</b>	Andy Hill Paul Caldwell Richard Coulson Geoff Hadfield Mark Hayton Jamie Plevin Julia Turner	Andy Hill Consultancy IQR RWE Hadfield Wood Recyclers Timberpak/Egger R Plevin & Sons WRA	Chair  Deputy Chair   Executive Director
<b>Apologies</b>	Clem Spencer Gayle Whittaker	Wood Yew Waste WRA Communications Lead	
<b>Advisers to the WRA</b>	Vicki Hughes	WRA Technical Committee	
<b>Presenters</b>	Angus Macpherson Peter Buckley Patrick McKell Andreas Tretten Richard Mehmed	T2E Environment Agency Defra Swedish Wood Fuel Association Community Wood Recycling	

**And a record 93 members and guests representing 70 companies and organisations, with 53 attending the afternoon workshop on the Waste Wood FPP Guide. (See attached attendee list)**

**Welcome and Introduction**

Andy Hill welcomed everyone, particularly our new members and guests (see slides). He formally launched the WRA Waste Wood FPP and thanked all those involved in producing it. He also thanked all members for their support over the last year. This was the biggest meeting ever with 106 attendees in total.

**Overview of PRNs**

Angus Macpherson from The Environment Exchange gave an overview of the PRN system, including the market, why it is there, how it works and current factors affecting it, links to the European Circular Economy package, current issues relating to wood and likely future trends. Angus believes that prices will not stay at this level but the principle of increasing producer responsibility seems to be working and raising the levels of waste wood packaging recycling.

He believed that we would achieve the targets for 2018 and supported the WRA view that the 2019 targets should not be reduced. He also welcomed the likelihood that in the proposed reform of the PRN system, reuse may be considered as eligible for PRNs. There will be a forthcoming consultation on the reform of packaging regulation. (See attached slides)

## **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 accounts are showing a healthy position, but we are slightly behind on turnover. Andy urged members to pay their membership fees in a timely manner
- It's great news that more and more people are attending meetings, but this will mean that larger venues will need to be used. It was therefore agreed at the Board meeting that the Membership fees should be increase by RPI from January 2019 to contribute to the additional expense this will incur.
- Andy explained that competition law was becoming a sensitive issue and that in future the Board had agreed that when members sign into the meetings, they should also sign to agree that they will abide by our Rules of Association and the relevant competition laws.

## **WRA Activity and Communications Update**

Julia gave an overview of both her activity and a communications update for the last quarter, focusing on the highlights covered in the attached slides.

She reported that membership had increased again with 7 more new members, now totalling 110. The focus for the next quarter will be on commencing testing/sampling work for the Waste Wood Classification project, collecting 2018 waste wood statistics and feeding the amalgamated results from this into the WRAP/Valpak work on waste wood flows, as well as starting to scope out work on dust/explosions with HSE.

On the communications side, good coverage had been achieved again during the last quarter with articles on our work on fire prevention and general industry update pieces appearing in the major trade titles. The focus for the next quarter will be on continued media coverage, as well as securing venues for our 2019 meetings and increasing our digital media presence.

## **Technical Update**

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

On FPP, as discussed earlier, the WRA Waste Wood FPP Guide has now been published and is available for all members as well as to other trade associations and their members. The WRA still want to keep abreast of approvals on the ground and any additional feedback on the guide should be sent to Julia. If more workshops are required, then they could be delivered in the New Year.

Richard also congratulated Hadfield on achieving an approved FPP for the UK Wood site with pile sizes outside of the standard ones outlined in the FPP guidance.

On Waste Wood Classification, there had been a slight delay from the EA to commence the sampling work, so the RPS was extended until September 2019. The construction and demolition sampling/testing work has started, but they require more involvement. HWRC sampling testing will commence early in the New Year.

On Biomass Suppliers List/RHI Guidance, the WRA has been appointed again to the BSL Advisory Panel for the next 2 years and will continue to provide waste wood input. Richard reported that an Air Quality Working Group involving BEIS, Ofgem, DEFRA and the EA had been set up. It will focus on 5 work streams: Understanding the Air Quality impact of RHI; Ofgem-led Enforcement; Biomass Combustion in Urban Areas; A Waste Wood Guide; and Efficiency of Boilers.

### **Update on FPPs**

Peter Buckley, who has recently been appointed to the role of Senior Fire Advisor at the EA, after 30 years' experience in the fire service and the last 8 years focusing specifically on waste fires amongst other very relevant areas, gave an update on FPPs from the EA's perspective. (See attached slides). He spoke briefly about the history and then focused on the aims of his role, which are to: Work with industry to promote consistency; Promote consistency within the EA; and Develop a Streamlined approach to FPP assessment. This will mean that Peter will be involved in facilitating the approval of some longstanding FPP submissions, trying to reduce the frustration between business and the EA and imparting greater knowledge of acceptable alternative measures. He has already adopted a flexible approach to working with businesses and hopes that this will lead to an improved relationship between them and the regulator and a smoother approach to approval of FPPs and permits. He will work closely with trade bodies and provide support in the development of their sector specific guidance. The WRA had been the first trade body to work with Peter in this way and he was very pleased with the outcome.

There was a question on whether Wales and Scotland were following the EA's approach and he said that NRW had adopted the WISH guidance, which had some key differences and, although Scotland has not experienced the same level of waste fires as in England and Wales, SEPA are watching the work of other regulators in this area with great interest. They also support the WISH work and are working with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, who are leading this work in Scotland.

### **Health and Safety Update**

Tim Johnson from HSE had experienced some technical difficulties with his slides, so, as there will be a new person taking over his role as wood lead at HSE in 2019, it was agreed that he and his new colleague should do a joint presentation at the March 2019 Members' Meeting.

### **Briefing on BREXIT and Implications for Waste Shipments**

Patrick McKell from Defra gave an overview of the implications on waste shipments of both an agreed withdrawal and a no-deal situation. (See attached slides) He confirmed that if there is an agreement, then there will be a 'time-limited' implementation period (until end 2020) and ahead of this, current rules will continue pretty much as they are now. During the implementation period, it will be agreed how things will work from 2020 onwards. Patrick did

note however that a review of the EU Waste Shipment Regulations is anticipated before end of 2020 and the UK will have limited opportunity to influence the shape of future EU regulations on shipments. It will therefore be important for trade associations such as ours to engage as much as possible with our European counterparts to ensure our input was included in discussions.

In a no-deal situation, the aim is to maintain the Status Quo as far as is reasonably possible and provide certainty and continuity for the regulation of international waste shipments. However, it will require an amendment to The International Waste Shipments Statutory Instrument and the proposed amendment was laid before the Joint Committee on SI's on 22 November 2018. The majority of EU countries have already responded positively to this amendment, but as yet, no response has been received from Sweden, Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands. After March 29<sup>th</sup> 2019, there may be disruption at UK ports which will affect all shipments. The UK regulators are preparing for this.

### **The Swedish Waste Wood Market**

Andreas Tretten from Econova Recycling and representing the Swedish Wood Fuel Association gave an overview of the wood market in Sweden and explained that competition for raw material for biomass is tough, with increasing prices and new facilities coming on stream. Swedish operators are now looking at potential cheaper alternatives, e.g. SRF and at other countries to fill the likely gap which will arise if the UK no longer exports waste wood. (See attached presentation).

### **Opportunities for Working with the Community Wood Recycling**

Richard Mehmed gave an overview of the Community Wood Recycling network and highlighted that even if only 10% of all waste wood generated was reusable, then that would mean circa 400K tonnes for its network members. At present, only 25 k tonnes are being processed, so Richard asked WRA wood recyclers to consider whether they could work more closely with their local network member to ensure that the full potential of reusable timber could be realised (see attached slides).

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

**Wednesday March 13<sup>th</sup> 2019 for Spring Meeting and AGM – venue tbc followed by tour of UK Wood Recycling and Sembcorp in Middlesbrough**

**Wednesday June 12<sup>th</sup> 2019 for Summer Members' Meeting – venue tbc**

**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**

### **Close of Meeting**

On behalf of the WRA Board, Andy Hill thanked all of our speakers and wished everyone a Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.