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**BD 06 M04
December 2006**

JNCC SUPPORT CO.

CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE EIGHTH MEETING OF THE JNCC SUPPORT CO. BOARD HELD THURSDAY 7 DECEMBER 2006 AT MONKSTONE HOUSE, CITY ROAD, PETERBOROUGH, PE1 1JY.

Present:

Dr Blakiston Houston
Dr Brown
Mr Darby (Chairman)
Professor Doyle
Professor Hill
Professor Ingram
Mr Pritchard
Professor Sprent
Mr Steer
Professor Usher
Dr Vincent
Professor Warren
Mr Yeo

In attendance:

Mr Burton
Mrs McQueen
Mrs Quince
Mr Thin

Apologies:

Mr Christensen
Mr Lloyd Jones

Contents:

1. Chairman's opening remarks
2. Declaration of interests
3. Amendments to minutes of the sixth Board meeting (**BD06P11**)
4. Matters arising (**oral update**)
5. Report from the Company Secretary (**oral**)
6. Report from Executive Management Board (**BD06P12**)
7. Second Quarter Monitoring Report 2006/07 (**BD06P13**)

8. Report from the Audit and Risk Management Committee (**oral**)
9. Any other business
- 1. Chairman's opening remarks**
 - 1.1 Chairman welcomed Professor Hill, Mr Pritchard and Professor Usher to their first meeting as Directors of the Company.
 - 1.2 Chairman informed the Board that Mr Thin was still considering whether to become a Director of the Company and therefore would be observing this meeting..
- 2. Declaration of interests**
 - 2.1 Nothing was declared.
- 3. Amendments to the minutes of the seventh Board meeting (BD06P11)**
 - 3.1 The amendment contained in the paper was agreed. The minutes were agreed for signing off by Chairman.
- 4. Matters arising**
 - 4.1 There were no matters arising.
- 5. Report from the Company Secretary (oral)**
 - 5.1 Mrs McQueen informed the Board that Mr Poul Christensen, Professor Hill, Mr Pritchard and Professor Usher had become Directors of the Company.
 - 5.2 The Board were informed that Dr Moser and Ms Fowler had resigned as Directors of the Company. Their details would be lodged with Companies House.
- 6. Report from Executive Management Board (BD06P12)**
 - 6.1 The Board were presented with a report from the Executive Management Board.
 - 6.2 The Board were informed that a JNCC sponsors meeting involving Defra, the devolved administrations and country agencies had taken place on 6 October. It was intended that Defra would agree JNCC's settlement for 2007/08 by January 2008.

- 6.3 The Board were informed that a pay remit for 2006/07 had been agreed by the Remuneration Committee and has been submitted to Defra for approval. It was hoped that a formal offer to trade unions could be made before Christmas.
- 6.4 The Board were informed that a new finance system has been installed and went live in October.
- 6.5 The Board were informed that a lease on the JNCC's Aberdeen office expires at the end of 2007. The possibility of sharing a new building with SNH and SEPA was being considered.
- 6.6 The Board were informed that a staff satisfaction survey had been completed in November. The results would be reported to the Board in March.

7. Second Quarter Monitoring Report 2006/07 (BD06P13)

- 7.1 Mr Yeo presented the Board with the second quarter monitoring report. Mr Yeo explained that due to the implementation of the new finance system, it had been necessary to postpone the production of the financial information relating to the second quarter until now. The Board were therefore presented with a report covering a period of seven months rather than the usual six. Mr Yeo went on to explain that the over-allocation of budget was being actively managed and would be reduced by the year-end. The Board were informed that at present, 3 targets were at serious risk. These targets would be refocused over a longer time period.
- 7.2 In discussion the following points were raised: -
 - i. the Board requested that figures presented to them in reports be rounded to the nearest £1k and nearest percentage point;
 - ii. the Board reaffirmed the importance of them receiving timely monitoring information to ensure they are informed of the organisation's financial position;
 - iii. consideration be given to implementing processes for managing the finances more evenly through the year, to avoid an end of year rush;
 - iv. on the performance tables the Board requested that arrows be included against each target to map whether the performance had gone up or down since the previous quarter.
- 7.3 The Board were informed that an over-haul of the pay system was planned in order to cap future salary costs.

8. Report from the Audit and Risk Management Committee (oral)

- 8.1 Professor Ingram gave an oral report of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Management Committee the previous day.

- 8.2 The Board were informed that following some changes to the membership of the Committee and Natural England coming into being, revised terms of reference had been tabled and approved.
- 8.3 The Committee had been presented with revised risk registers. The Committee were impressed with the quality of the registers. Committee considered which risks should be chosen as the 'top six' to report to the Board. Risks were chosen and the Executive Management Board were asked to consider which risks should be removed from the current list to make way for new risks.
- 8.4 The Committee had been presented with an update on the action plan on external audit and a note regarding the implementation of the finance system. Committee were pleased that the implementation of the new finance system had gone smoothly and expressed their thanks to David Burton and his team for their hard work and effort.
- 8.5 The Committee had received an early draft of the internal audit strategy and operational plan for 2007/08. Following discussions, members and auditors agreed the approach the internal auditors had proposed but requested flexibility in the programme to cover areas, which are unforeseen at the beginning of the year.
- 8.6 The Committee were advised that due to unforeseen circumstances fieldwork on 3 audits had been delayed and some additional work had been undertaken. Therefore, no final audit reports were presented at the meeting. The Committee were assured that this was a one-off occurrence and timetabling for 2007/08 would negate this happening in the future.

9. Any other business

- 9.1 No items were discussed.