

The Westminster Foundation for Democracy Limited
Company Number 2693163

**Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Governors (Part B) held in Committee Room 19,
Palace of Westminster, on Wednesday, 9 April 2014**

Present

Henry Bellingham MP (Chair)
Ann McKechin MP (Vice Chair)
Rushanara Ali MP
Ken Caldwell
Tina Fahm
John Osmond
Andrew Rosindell MP
Rt Hon Sir Andrew Stunell MP
Pete Wishart MP

In attendance

Paul Naismith	Acting CEO
Jamie Tronnes	Director of Programmes
Kate Bunbury	M&E Adviser
Chris Harmer	Communications Manager
Philippa Broom	Conservative Party
Nabila Sattar	Labour Party
Iain Gill	Liberal Democrats
Chris Levick	Smaller Parties
Andrew Tesoriere	Head, FCO Triennial Review
Rob Fenn	Head, Human Rights & Democracy Department, FCO
Emma Kouki	Desk Officer, Democracy & Elections, HRDD, FCO
Shiona Ruhemann	Senior Adviser, Governance, Open Societies & Anti-Corruption Dept, DFID
Micol Martini	Governance Adviser, Governance, Open Societies & Anti-Corruption Dept, DFID
Tamara Moluch	Minute Taker

4. Apologies for absence were received from Bronwen Manby.

Henry Bellingham reported that Governors had had a useful, frank and open discussion in Part A and hoped to take advantage of future Board meetings to convene similar brief private discussions on a regular basis. He confirmed that the Board had agreed to convene a Governor-only meeting on 30 April and that the proposed Away Day would now take place before the Parliamentary summer recess.

5. Conflict of Interest Declarations - None declared.

6. Minutes of Board meetings (Document B1)

Following an amendment to Agenda Item 4 – Action Point 1, the minutes of the Board meeting held on 5 February 2014 were **APPROVED** and duly signed by the Chair.

7. Matters arising (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)

In response to concerns raised by John Osmond, the Board **AGREED** that, as a way of tracking progress, the Board would, in future, receive reports on the implementation status of all action points agreed at Board meetings.

ACTION POINT 1/APR.14: **A status report on the implementation status of all action points agreed at Board meetings to be presented at each Board meeting (beginning from the February 2014 Board meeting).**

8. Update on FCO Triennial Review (Oral presentation by Andrew Tesoriere)

Andrew Tesoriere updated the Board on the FCO Triennial Review:

- 1) **The Approach:** Under the Terms of Reference, the reviewers had been invited to approach their work with an open mind, be guided by the experience of other reviews and, in particular, make use of the findings of DFID's Mid-Term Review currently being conducted by an External Evaluation Team (EET). They were to seek out a convergence of ideas, pinpoint divergent views and scout for new and innovative ideas through research and analysis of evidence gathered through discussions with various key UK stakeholders, political parties and various consortia members (TWC etc) as well as surveys conducted with Posts closely connected with WFD, MPs, academia and key WFD stakeholders. Due to the amount of work involved and a revised EET timetable, the first draft would not now be ready until end-April and the final report and recommendations by mid-May/early-June.
- 2) **The way forward:** Some changes would emerge from the findings, implying a degree of transformation to the way WFD operated. It was expected that HMG and the Board would consider the report and recommendations by end-June.

3) The substantive issues:

- One of the main areas of convergence was a shared ambition for WFD to continue and to realise its full potential, which would involve becoming more articulate in the formulation of its **strategy**. Accordingly, an annual strategy plan was being considered which would provide clarity, leadership, direction and possibly a tighter and narrower focus.
- With regards to **funding**, the Review was looking at:
 - an integrated 'central pot of funds' from which political parties could also apply for funding;
 - a 'ring-fenced pot of funds' for political parties' sister party activities (including administrative costs);
 - a smaller 'flexible pot of funds' for innovative, pre-emptive, reactive activities as well as scoping and assessment work.

A certain resource balancing between the central and field operations would be expected to ensure sufficient investment in the field.

- **Planning** would need to be inclusive of political parties, including at the very early conceptual stages. Some pre-Board activity at the operational level was also being considered which would take some pressure away from the Board and free it for more strategic discussions.
 - **Status:** whilst there was consensus that the WFD remain an arms-length NDPB, there was and continues to be much discussion around governance, including suggestions such as:
 - increasing the financial authority level of the CEO to around £75,000;
 - reviewing the composition of the Board – including the ratio between political and independent governors, the inclusion of HMG, and the appointment of two co-chairs – one political, one independent.
 - Whilst fully recognising that WFD was an iconic brand, there was a sense that it needed not only a stronger domestic and internal **profile** but to become more forward leaning and outward facing.
 - **Sustainability**, including business development, growth, working with others, etc. was also being addressed.
- 4) **Outstanding issues:** political party work and governance.

In the discussion that followed, the following points were raised:

- Responding to Ken Caldwell, Andrew Tesoriere explained that, because of the way the review had been set up, the reviewers were relying on the EET to provide the necessary impact assessments of WFD programmes. They had, however, been able to accompany the EET in Kenya where they had obtained first hand feedback. The reviewers were speaking to as many stakeholders as possible: for example, feedback from Posts had been fairly mixed, relating mainly to the poor level of communications, particularly at the early stages of programme development. On the parliamentary side, UK stakeholders were saying that more could be done, especially if parliamentary in-house skills were strengthened; on the political party side, discussions centred on the relative depth of UK expertise compared to that in-country.
- Andrew Rossendale stressed the need for the political parties to be allowed to continue to do what they knew best but in a much simpler and easier way. In echoing this, Rushanara Ali welcomed the thrust of the review particularly the changes to funding. However, she felt that the review process, though necessary, at times ran the risk of not focusing enough attention on WFD's activities. Concerns about processes and in particular the structure of the Board, could mean yet more changes at a time when major changes were already in the pipeline. It was important that recommendations were implemented with as little process and bureaucracy as possible in order to allow staff and Governors to carry out their main duties. Andrew Tesoriere said that in his discussions with the political parties, the potential extra layers of bureaucracy had been raised and he had noted the need for extra resource within party offices should there be an increase in cross-party work.
- Rushanara Ali then asked that the appropriateness and proportionality of recommendations be taken on board. And, as highlighted by Paul Naismith, the difficulties WFD faced in planning ahead with certainty as a result of the often short-term nature of funding. Henry Bellingham added that one such change had already been implemented very quickly and that was that the Governors would meet privately allowing them to maximise input, particularly from the independent members. The first such meeting had already taken place ahead of the Board meeting.
- Rushanara Ali stressed the need for better cooperation between WFD and FCO / DFID. Adding that, despite numerous attempts, this had not yet happened to the extent necessary to achieve the shared outcomes. She also referred to a perceived misalignment between how FCO, DFID and WFD measured the impact of WFD's work (particularly of its political party work). This had been raised at numerous Board meetings and by Andrew Stunell at a recent WFD/DFID roundtable. This they felt was at the heart of some of the misunderstandings between WFD and its funders and required urgent attention. Andrew Tesoriere confirmed that this point was being addressed as part of looking at the need for a common ground to reflect the reality of cross-government work.
- In welcoming the proposed changes to funding, Tina Fahm was mindful that, from an organisational change perspective, changes often required additional resources and asked that this be kept in mind and, if possible, an appraisal made of any cost implications. Andrew Tesoriere agreed that changes could have cost implications, but felt that, though he had used the term 'transformation', the proposed changes would be light.

In recognising the above points, Andrew Tesoriere said that the Triennial Review was limited in its scope and a number of the issues raised were outside its scope and would need to be followed-up separately. From the point of view of accountability, Andrew said that the Review had been asked to look at how WFD was positioned in terms of public accountability and transparency which was why a number of issues had been raised around the Board and other governance structures, including the question of due diligence. The need for a vigorous approach to high-level impact of programmes had also been highlighted by one Government Department. Evidence had also been heard for the introduction of robust systems but he fully understood the need to calibrate recommendations in an appropriate way so that the work could flow smoothly and ultimately allow bureaucracy to diminish.

In summary, Andrew Tesoriere reiterated that the role of the review was to gather as much evidence as possible, analyse it and ultimately put forward recommendations for HMG consideration and approval.

9. Approve programme proposals/budget changes (Documents B2a-b)

Philippa Broom addressed two issues raised in the comments:

- i. She confirmed that the proposals were not 'stand alone' activities but part of ongoing work and in line with WFD's current Business Plan. She had spoken with Bronwen Manby, one of the Governors who had raised this point, who had made it clear that this had not been aimed specifically at the proposals themselves but at the wider picture of WFD's overall strategy. Henry Bellingham agreed and said that this would be one of the top priorities for the new CEO.
- ii. Philippa agreed with the comments around overspend / over-commitment. However, she said that over-commitment had been – and continued to be – the mechanism by which parties' managed their resources. Through this, she had been able to, over the past 12 years, achieve full year spend and at times absorbed additional funding. John Osmond, however, felt that the current system undermined the Board's ability to drive a strategic focus aimed at achieving certain outcomes in certain countries. He asked that the Board consider a mechanism for overseeing levels of allocation in its discussion of the roles of the organisation and the Board. Ken Caldwell noted that this question had been raised at numerous Board meetings and asked that it be considered by the Board at its next Away Board.

Andrew Stunell drew attention to the large number of programmes attributed to the political parties; a number refuted by the parties.

ACTION POINT 2/APR.14: An aggregate list of party programmes to be prepared for the next Board meeting.

The Board **APPROVED** the following proposals/budget changes submitted by the Conservative Party:

- **Botswana:** BDP Party Development Programme (AI)
- **Montenegro:** PzP Party Development Project (EI)
- **World-wide:** IDU Strengthening the centre right network (RI)
- Budget correction: **WWI4A52C** World-wide: Election Study Observation Programme & Peacetime Campaigning Programme
- Budget increase: **AAI4A110C** DUA Africa-wide Two Year Programme

Reports for Information

A. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) **Audit Committee** (Document B3a-b)

Tina Fahm drew the Board's attention to the fact that, at the January meeting, NAO had said it would not be able to sign off WFD's 2013-14 accounts in July without a statement of going concern in light of FCO's indication that it would await the outcome of its Triennial Review (then expected end-March) before confirming WFD's grant-in-aid for 2014-15. However, though the timetables of both DFID's Mid-Term Review and FCO's Triennial Review had since slipped, Tina was pleased to note that the FCO had confirmed its funding of WFD for 2014-15 and she assured the Board that the Audit Committee would be keeping a watching brief to ensure that the tight deadline for signing off the accounts was met.

Tina also drew the Board's attention to Documents B3b and B4, two internal audit reports that required Board attention. John Osmond further explained that document B4 summarised the internal audit findings relating to Health & Safety which would be dealt with by the Terms & Conditions Committee. The second report referred to a draft internal audit paper on

Programmes and Projects that had raised concerns around WFD's governance. Paul Naismith confirmed that he had now received the final draft and the report would soon be ready for the Board's consideration. In noting the urgency of the matter, Tina Fahm assured the Board that the draft report had been fully considered by the Audit Committee who had recommended that the report be finalised and presented to the Board by 30 April.

The Board **NOTED** the minutes of the 18 March 2014 meeting of the Audit Committee.

- b) **Terms & Conditions Committee** - The Board **NOTED** that the Terms & Conditions Committee would consider the BDO report Regulatory Compliance in Health & Safety Legislation (document B4) at its next meeting on 30 April.

B. OTHER REPORTS

a) **Chief Executive's report**

In the time he had been Acting CEO, Paul Naismith said priority had been given to the year-end accounts, the DFID and FCO reviews and keeping staff focused on their work. He would keep staff updated on developments and would be meeting with party officers on a regular basis. He assured the Board that all was being done to take WFD's work forward in a positive way.

At its last meeting, the Audit Committee had asked for a contingency budget for 2014-15 that would take account of the proposed reduction in Year 3 of DFID's accountable grant. Document B5 presented two options for managing the reduction in funding and was before the Board for consideration and approval. **Option 1** assumed a lower figure from the outset whilst continuing to make serious approaches to about restoring the full level of funding. **Option 2** was more risky in that it treated the revenue reduction as a 'known' factor that would be relieved either by cost underspends as they arose or restored funding by DFID if conditions permitted. The latter option was not recommended.

Responding to Ann McKechin, Paul said that cancelling budget increases approved in February was not an easy option as those increases, especially in the Kenya programme, were not incremental changes but reflected a redesigned programme following decisions of the February Board meeting. Since then, managers have been operating to programme redesigns. Ann also raised concerns about the message that WFD would give out by cutting the budget from the joined-up assessment work envisaged under the Capacity Building and Innovation Fund. Paul said that the cuts had been targeted to those areas that could bear the brunt with the least impact. The reduced funds to be allocated to the joint-programmes were considered sufficient to cover activities planned for 2013-14. Ken Caldwell called for a middle ground which saw a lower reduction in WFD's core programmes. However, Paul said that his proposal already struck a balance between the joint-programmes and core programmes. Also, he had made the decision not to reduce the funding of the political party work but focus on the parliamentary and capacity building work; one reason for this being the difficulty in revisiting the formula for the internal distribution of funds.

The Board **APPROVED** the revised budget for 2014-15 as presented under **Option 1** and **AGREED** that the approaches to DFID for a reversal of their decision to reduce the 2014-15 budget should continue.

- b) **Quarterly Monitoring reports October – December 2013** - The Board **NOTED** the reports would be available end-April.
- c) **Programmes approved since November 2013 meeting of the Board** (Document B6a) - The Board **NOTED** the report.
- d) **External funding proposals at bidding / concept stage** (Document B6b) - The Board **NOTED** the report.

- e) **Summary of all programme commitments from April 2012 to date** (Document B6c) - The Board **NOTED** the report.
- f) **List of open / closed projects and programmes** (Document B6d) - The Board **NOTED** the report.

ACTION POINT 3/APR.14: **The reporting system and the administration process for reporting open and closed projects and programmes to be reviewed.**

- g) **Finance Director's report** (Documents B7a-b) – The Board **NOTED** the reports and the risk concerns arising over the next 2-6 months as outlined in the risk dashboard.
 - h) **Freedom of information requests** (Document B8a) - The Board **NOTED** the report.
 - i) **Details of programmes for publication on website** (Document B8b) - The Board **NOTED** the report.
9. **Any other business** – Henry Bellingham updated the Board on the CEO recruitment process. There had been a large amount of interest from which a long list of candidates has now been prepared. The first interviews were underway and on 29 April the sub-committee would prepare a short list for final interviews to take place on 8 May.
10. **Date of next meeting: Wednesday, 25 June 2014 at 09.30h.**

Chair.....



Date: 25 June 2014

The Westminster Foundation for Democracy Limited
Company Number 2693163

Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Governors (Parts A and B) held in Committee Room 11, Palace of Westminster, on Wednesday, 25 June 2014

Present	Henry Bellingham MP (Chair)	
Parts A & B	Ann McKechin MP (Vice Chair)	
	Rushanara Ali MP	
	Ken Caldwell	
	Tina Fahm	
	Bronwen Manby	
	John Osmond	
	Andrew Rosindell MP	
	Rt Hon Sir Andrew Stunell MP	
	Pete Wishart MP	
	Paul Naismith (Acting CEO)	
	Anthony Smith (CEO Designate)	
In attendance	George Kunnath	Head of Europe Team
Part B only	Romana Janku	Programme Officer, Europe Team
	Sarah Leigh-Hunt	Programme Officer, MENA Team
	Philippa Broom	Conservative Party
	Nabila Sattar	Labour Party
	Iain Gill	Liberal Democrats
	Chris Levick	Smaller Parties
	Nigel Dickerson	Head, Human Rights & Democracy Department, FCO
	Nerys Jones	Deputy Head, Human Rights & Democracy Department, FCO
	Emma Kouki	Desk Officer, Democracy & Elections, HRDD, FCO
	Aislin Baker	Political Governance Adviser, DFID
	Tamara Moluch	Minute Taker

Decisions taken and/or Actions agree by the Board in Part A

- The Board AGREED the Terms of Reference of the **Task Group Reviewing the Functioning of the Board** (Document A1)
- The following appointments were made to Board Committees:
 - Bronwen Manby Member Audit Committee
 - Andrew Rosindell MP Member Terms & Conditions Committee

In addition, John Osmond would be appointed Chair of the Audit Committee in succession to Tina Fahm upon her retirement as a Governor in August 2014.

Part B

5. **Apologies for absence** - None
6. **Conflict of Interest Declarations** - None declared.
7. **Minutes of Board meetings** (Document B1)

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 9 April 2014 were **APPROVED** and duly signed by the Chair.

8. **Matters arising** (not covered elsewhere on the agenda) (Document B1a)

Agenda Item 8: FCO Triennial Review – Further to a draft recommendation circulated to Governors for comment, Nerys Jones confirmed that FCO and DFID were keen to work together on introducing a democracy strengthening strategy plan and that Ministers were expected to endorse this action shortly.

ACTION POINT 3/APR.14: Paul Naismith confirmed that a review of the system and administration process for reporting open / closed projects and programmes would be carried out in July and a report on recommended action would be circulated to the Board.

9. **Approve Programme Proposals** (Documents B2: E1 & M1)

Nabila Sattar thanked the Board for its comments on the two draft proposals. She noted that, whilst political parties and regional teams were moving towards joined-up programming, work needed to continue if current funding requirements were to be met. Without advice to the contrary, Labour has continued to develop multi-year programmes. However, following discussion with Paul Naismith, Labour would only seek funding for activities to March 2015. Accordingly, the two proposals had been presented in a way to ensure that the first nine months of activities were stand alone; and activities for Year 2 and 3 would be reviewed at a later date and be subject to the planned strategy review. Paul Naismith confirmed that work towards joined-up programming was now moving forward at a pace and that a joined-up programme proposal would shortly be presented to the Board for consideration.

The Board **APPROVED** the following funding:

E1. Western Balkans: Strengthening the Social Democratic Left
The sum of **£155,695** for activities to **March 2015 only**

M1. MENA-wide: Strengthening the Social Democratic Left
The sum of **£183,144** for activities to **March 2015 only**

10. **Annual Report and Accounts for the FY 2013-14**

Paul Naismith noted that the Annual Report and Accounts for FY 2013-14 were not being tabled at the Board meeting in the usual way. The FCO had asked for an unsigned copy of the final Report and Accounts by 23 June so as to have assurance of WFD's accounts in order to comply with their own audit deadlines. Accordingly, following their inspection and recommendation by the Audit Committee on behalf of the Board, the proposed Accounts had been circulated electronically to the Board and approved accordingly to meet this deadline. The Accounts had now been signed and were awaiting the approval of the Foreign Secretary for them to be laid in Parliament.

The Board **NOTED** the approved Annual Report and Accounts for the FY 2013-14.

11. **Annual Review of WFD's work against M&E Framework**

Paul Naismith reported that it was a requirement of DFID's accountable grant that WFD prepare an **annual review of its work against the M&E framework**. The review for the second year of work was due end-June. Paul said that this would be finalised by the end of the week and would be circulated later to Governors for information and comment. As in the first year, DFID would use the review to prepare a scored assessment of WFD's work.

Aislin Baker confirmed that the final version of each DFID review became a public records document and was posted online, as with all DFID reports and publications. Ken Caldwell suggested that the Board take the opportunity provided by DFID's annual report to review the effectiveness of WFD's work over the last year, both as part of its own review responsibilities and in considering how the findings might influence forward planning.

Paul added that **FCO's Triennial Review** draft recommendations had now been discussed by the Board. Nerys Jones expected the final version of the Triennial Review to be presented to Ministers by the end of the week though time would then be needed for Ministerial sign-off. She also confirmed that she would pass on WFD's recommendation that ownership of each recommendation be clearly attributed.

Aislin Baker said she expected **DFID's External Mid-Term Review** to be finalised within the next few weeks and that WFD would have advance notice of its release date in order to prepare a Management Response if required. Philippa Broom raised concerns that some of the analysis of sister party work presented in the Review risked damaging sister-party trust-based relationships if published. In response, Aislin said that DFID automatically removed references that put partners at risk. Although findings could not be altered, terminology of relevant findings could be revisited and she would pass these concerns on.

Pending Ministerial sign-off, the Board supported work to begin on the development of the Business Plan 2015-16 using the information already available in the draft reviews. Despite possible delays in the sign-off, Anthony Smith suggested that work begin on a plan of action for implementation of the recommendations which could then be discussed with the Board to ensure that all issues were covered. The Board welcomed this suggestion.

Reports for Information

12. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Audit Committee (Document B3a-b)

Minutes of 17 June 2014 Audit Committee meeting: Audit Committee 2014 Annual Report to the WFD Board - Tina Fahm introduced the **Minutes of the Audit Committee** meeting. She was pleased to announce that the NAO had provided an unqualified audit opinion which, as far as she was aware, continued WFD's unbroken record of unqualified opinions. The considerable amount of work that had been accomplished to achieve this success could not be underestimated and she asked that her thanks to Committee members, Philippa Broom (political party representative), Paul Naismith and Tamara Moluch (Committee Secretary) for their support be put on record. Tina also welcomed Henry Bellingham's comment that reporting was becoming more transparent. In recognising the work that remained to be done, she was confident that WFD was on the right trajectory. In her introduction of the **Audit Committee Annual Report to the Board**, she highlighted the Audit Committee's objectives for 2014-15.

The Board **NOTED** the Minutes of the 18 March 2014 meeting of the Audit Committee and the Committee's Annual Report 2014.

b) Terms & Conditions Committee (Document B4)

Minutes of the 30 April 2014 Terms & Conditions Committee meeting - Ann McKechin introduced the Minutes of the Terms & Conditions Committee meeting which she noted had not met for some time. She highlighted the Internal Audit recommendation relating to WFD's regulatory compliance in the area of health & safety and the subsequent Committee recommendations. These included the requirement for a draft health & safety policy to be placed in a prominent place for the guidance of staff, which had now been done. The health & safety policy was expected to be finalised by October and would be presented to the Board for approval at its November meeting.

In line with WFD's pay policy which mirrored FCO settlements, the Committee noted the management's plans to increase base pay for UK staff by 1% from 1 April 2014 and would await official announcement of FCO's pay and reward policy before implementation. The pay of overseas staff would also be reviewed with the aim to follow UK policy but, where appropriate, take into consideration local factors.

The Board **NOTED** the Minutes of the April 2014 meeting of the Terms & Conditions Committee.

13. OTHER REPORTS

- a) **Chief Executive's report** (Document B5) - Paul Naismith referred to his earlier comments on the external reviews and the implementation of recommendations of the external reviews (see Agenda Item 11 above). He reported that collaborative work amongst political parties and regional teams was beginning to bear fruit and a first innovative joined-up programme for Bosnia and Herzegovina to be funded by the Capacity Building and Innovation Fund, was expected to be presented to the Board for approval under the Urgency procedure in July. A second joined-up programme was in an earlier stage of development. Planned for Tunisia, this was required to demonstrate original ways of joined-up working and expressly not a rebranding of the cancelled APF programme. It was hoped to present the proposal to the Board for approval at its September meeting.

Initial work on developing a business plan for FY 2015-16 had started. In this context, Andrew Stunell foresaw serious timing issues should there be lengthy delays in Ministerial sign-offs of the reviews and asked that FCO and DFID keep WFD informed of timing.

Access to DFID training, offered during discussions on the Mid-Term Review, has resulted in WFD having four places on a training course on Political Economic Analysis in Action (PEA). Two Heads of Programmes and two party officers would be attending the course, which was also expected to help improve collaborative working and any immediate benefits would be disseminated promptly.

Following a setback, a new M&E Adviser would join WFD on 9 July. The recruitment of a Director of Programmes had also now started and the CEO Designate, Anthony Smith, has been fully involved. Submission of a business case for FCO approval forms part of the recruitment process.

The Board **NOTED** the report.

- b) **Quarterly Progress Reports – Q4** (Document B6a) - John Osmond noted that the reports covered the period January to March 2014 which meant they were too historic to be useful to the Board in its oversight responsibilities. He suggested that future Board meetings be scheduled to fall in line with such reporting.

In response to a point raised by John Osmond, Paul Naismith said that the recent high level of turnover of field staff was not perceived as a serious problem as it mainly applied to new starters; established field offices had loyal and competent staff and steps were now being taken to ensure higher standards of new appointees to mitigate this occurrence in future. He further noted that the current senior and experienced field managers had been responsible for the smooth programme start-ups that had resulting in a number of the successes highlighted in the reviews and which had been achieved as a result of the current staffing structure. In light of these successes, John questioned the findings of the Mid-Term Review which had criticised the heavy weighting towards London staff load as opposed to field staff and suggested that this was in fact a strong counter-argument to their finding.

The Mid-Term Review had also highlighted a number of problems in the work of WFD's support to the East African Legislative Assembly and Andrew Stunell suggested that this may have been alleviated had regional teams drawn on party relationships. He did accept that, in this particular case, this may have had little effect on the outcome, however he strongly urged that WFD regional teams and political parties facilitate each other's work in order to maximise each other's added value.

The Board **NOTED** the reports.

- c) **External funding proposals at bidding / concept stage** (Document B6b) - The Board **NOTED** the report.

- d) **Programmes approved since April 2014 meeting of the Board** (Document B6c) - The Board **NOTED** the report.
- e) **Summary of all programme commitments from April 2012 to date** (Document B6d) – The Board **NOTED** the report and welcomed John Osmond and Paul Naismith taking forward the work on how best this information could be presented in future.
- f) **List of open / closed projects and programmes** (Document B6e) – The Board **NOTED** the report.
- g) **Finance Director's report** (Documents B7a) – Paul Naismith introduced the **Management Accounts – Review of 2013-14** which he said were consistent with the statutory accounts. Ken Caldwell reiterated concerns that as overall programme spend had fallen in 2013-14, overall overheads costs had increased. He suggested Paul Naismith build in checks and balances that would allow the situation to be monitored. Paul said this imbalance had been the result of one-off expenditures and would not be repeated. Ken also noted the continued underspend under the Capacity Building and Innovation Fund and felt that priority be given to identifying and developing activities that could benefit from this funding and welcomed the work being undertaken on developing two joined-up proposals. In introducing the **Management Accounts - two months to May 2014** that summarised activities in the first two months of the FY, Paul noted the perennial concern of maintaining spend levels throughout the year but felt that at this early stage it was too difficult to read anything into the figures.

The Board **NOTED** the report.

- h) **Risk Dashboard to June 2014** (Documents B7b) – At the request of the Audit Committee, Paul Naismith flagged up risks posed by capacity issues. This followed concerns raised by the Committee that current staffing shortages risked an adverse shift in WFD's risk profile. In Paul's view, current staff vacancies did not risk such an adverse shift, however, to facilitate future monitoring, relevant capacity measures (staffing, skills, financial, etc.) would be included in the Risk Dashboard.

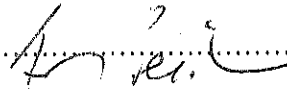
The Board **NOTED** the report.

- i) **Communications Update – June 2014** (Document B8a) – Paul Naismith said that this Update was one example of improving external communications. Others included the relaunch of WFD's quarterly newsletter, the updating of reports on the website etc. John Osmond noted the lack of sister party reports in the Update and asked that these be included to help balance reporting. Bronwen Manby highlighted the wealth of experience to be found in political party programmes, some of which had been shared with the Board. This could easily be prepared for wider distribution together with in-depth analysis of their work. Philippa Broom confirmed that the preparation of such reports had already begun as part of the work plan of the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democratic Joint Innovation Bid that had been approved by the Board in February 2014.
 - j) **Freedom of information requests – May to June 2014** (Document B8b) - The Board **NOTED** the report.
 - k) **Closed political party programmes for publication on website** (Document B8c) - The Board **NOTED** the report.
9. **Any other business** – The Board **AGREED** to reschedule the planned Away Day for late October. Henry Bellingham took the opportunity to thank Tina Fahm – who would be stepping down as Governor in August - for her outstanding contribution to the work of WFD. He also warmly welcomed Anthony Smith to his first Board meeting. Anthony would be taking up his duties as CEO in August.

ACTION POINT 1/JUN.14: Henry Bellingham/Paul Naismith/Anthony Smith/ to find a suitable date for an October Away Day

10. **Date of next meeting:** Because of scheduling problems, the Board agreed to reschedule the 10 September 2014 meeting.

ACTION POINT 2/JUN.14: Tamara Moluch to canvass Board members for a suitable date as near as possible to 10 September for the next Board meeting

Chair..........
Date: 11 September 2014

**Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Governors held in Committee Room 19,
Palace of Westminster, on Thursday, 11 September 2014**

Present	Henry Bellingham MP (Chair)	
	Ken Caldwell	
	Bronwen Manby	
	Rt Hon Sir Andrew Stunell MP	
In attendance	Anthony Smith	CEO
	Paul Naismith	Finance Director
	Graeme Renshaw	M&E Adviser
	George Kunnath	Head of Europe Team
	Dina Melhem	Head of MENA Team
	Chris Harmer	Communications Manager
	Philippa Broom	Conservative Party
	Nabila Sattar	Labour Party
	Iain Gill	Liberal Democrats
	Chris Levick	Smaller Parties
	Lucy Ahad	Head, Human Rights & Democracy Dept, FCO
	Neil Angell	Deputy Head, Human Rights & Democracy Dept, FCO
	Emma Kouki	Desk Officer, Democracy & Elections, HRDD, FCO
	Aislin Baker	Political Governance Adviser, DFID
	Tamara Moluch	Minute Taker

1. Welcomes and Apologies for absence

Henry Bellingham **welcomed** Anthony Smith, WFD's newly appointed Chief Executive, to his first Board meeting.

Apologies were received from Rushanara Ali, Ann McKechin, John Osmond, Andrew Rosindell and Pete Wishart

2. Conflict of Interest Declarations - None declared.

3. Minutes of Board meetings (Document 1a-b)

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 25 June 2014 **APPROVED** and duly signed by the Chair.

Action Point 3/Apr.14 - review of process for reporting open/ closed projects and programmes: Anthony Smith referred the Board to Agenda Item 5 (Forward Board Agenda) and a proposal for the Board to review key management information in the form of a quarterly dashboard which would provide more coherent key performance indicator of WFD's financial and business processes; information on open/closed projects and programmes would be part of this dashboard. A proposal on how this information might be presented will be considered by the Board at its November meeting.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION

As a prelude to discussion, Anthony Smith gave a snapshot of his first impressions of WFD. In his first weeks as CEO, he had met everyone at the Board meeting on a one-to-one basis and had been warmly welcomed by all. His initial impressions had been reinforced. The work that WFD was engaged in was of huge importance to both national and international priorities and WFD should be making significant contributions to this effort. Everyone he had met was enthusiastic about WFD and, whilst agreeing that WFD was not living up to its potential, all were eager to invest energy and resources into improving the way WFD worked, particularly at the collective level. He was supportive of WFD's party work / parliamentary work model and also saw an opportunity for WFD to strengthen and extend its collaboration with others working in the field of democracy. In so doing, UK's impact in this area would increase.

WFD now has the opportunity and great potential to move forward; and the work now needs to begin in earnest.

4. Response to FCO Triennial Review (Document 2)

Anthony Smith introduced a proposed response to those recommendations in the Triennial Review that enjoyed support among Governors, stressing the need for an urgent response in order to prepare a Business Case by end-2014 for further DFID funding as well as compete successfully for other funding in 2015.

In **APPROVING** the four-part agenda outlined in the document and **ENDORISING** the urgency of the planned work, the Board made the following comments:

- A new strategic framework
Ken Caldwell raised the need to clearly define and agree the areas to be covered in the strategic framework, including, as highlighted by Andrew Stunell, the role of politics which was part of WFD's unique selling point. Ken also supported the proposed consultation workshop which he said was an opportunity for WFD to rebuild its profile with key external opinion-formers in the democracy building world. A draft strategic framework would be considered by the Board at its November meeting.
- Improved programme quality
As work on improving programme quality progressed, process indicators would need to be developed to track progress and an appropriate reporting system put in place to facilitate the Board's oversight of programme quality.
- Reformed governance structure, roles and responsibility
See agenda item 5 below.
- Cross-cutting issues, etc. communications and systems modernisation
- Milestones
The following additions were proposed: the recruitment of Programme and Policy Directors; development of the annual Business Plan for 2015-16; the proposed high-profile external event; and the 2015 UK General Election. In this connection, Andrew Stunell asked that thought be given as to how momentum could be maintained as WFD came to the end of one funding cycle and entered another whilst, at the same time, the UK General Election would put much of WFD's political party work on hold. The Board also agreed that it could benefit from its own set of milestones.

5. **Forward Board Agenda** (Document 3)

Anthony Smith introduced a Forward Board Agenda plan which outlined possible issues for Board discussion over the next year. The revised agenda would respond to the Triennial Review's recommendation that the Board play a more strategic role and take note of the possible removal from the agenda of some of the transactional processes around project approval. The issues covered were:

- Approval of WFD's Strategic Framework and overall direction and reviews of progress
- Periodic debates on the context of WFD's work, eg. key challenges to strengthening democracy, and international trends on support to governance
- Examination of democracy strengthening issues in specific regions
- Review of key management information in the form of a quarterly dashboard / management report (to allow the Board keep track of key performance indicators around financial and operational/business processes and analytical information).

As background to the discussion, Ken Caldwell updated the Board on the review he and Ann McKechin had been asked to undertake at the last Board meeting around the function of the Board and how it could better add value and support the executive team in future. Following consultation with the majority of Board members, the review was now in its final stages and a report would be presented to the Board at its November meeting. To date, consensus had emerged around the following:

- The Board should concentrate on strategic discussions around democracy building issues and its challenges;
- Less time should be spent on detailed operational issues and programme approval;
- To allow the Board the time to become more strategic, and subject to certain safeguards, the Board would delegate approval of all projects to the CEO;
- Current Board structure, scheduling and attendance needed to be revisited to provide opportunities for strategic debate;
- Governors expressed interest in becoming more involved in WFD's work eg. representation, networking, hands-on experience as well as helping bridge WFD's party – non-party divide.

Iain Gill drew the Board's attention to current FCO and DFID funding of private companies and international democracy organisations and the need for WFD to reach an operational level that would convince funders of our ability to deliver. Anthony Smith assured the Board that WFD was not being ignored. Whilst acknowledging that WFD needed to improve delivery, he felt that much more could be done to communicate WFD successes to funders in the field. Lucy Ahab said that WFD had FCO's full support and looked forward to discussions on how FCO could assist in taking its work forward. Henry Bellingham agreed that work to strengthen WFD's operations would greatly enhance its reputation and branding.

6. **Any Other Business**

a) Bosnia-Herzegovina Joined up Programme

George Kunnath gave a brief overview of the Bosnia-Herzegovina joined-up programme which brought together WFD's political party and parliamentary streams of activity with the aim of improving women's representation in Bosnia & Herzegovina's political environment. The unique aspect of this programme was its cross-party approach to a multi-layered programme that built towards sound and measurable objectives. All four political parties

were committed to the programme and, once the initial concept had been agreed – which had been a challenging process – only the modalities remain to be worked out. The programme itself represented a three-year commitment leading to the 2016 general elections. However, as work on some activities could be carried out within the current FY, the overall programme would benefit from an initial one-year funding agreement, approved under WFD's Urgency procedure.

With regards to lessons learnt, George stressed the need for better joined-up assessment and project scoping. All agreed the need to develop a proper methodology for joined-up programmes; the parties adding that structures and processes would need to be developed whilst retaining a level of flexibility and nimbleness that would allow integration. They also highlighted their limited resources saying that their biggest challenge was finding the time to come together to develop the programme.

b) Final independent evaluation of the EU Georgia Programme (Document 8)

George Kunnath introduced the final independent evaluation of the EU-funded programme, whose aim had been threefold:

- Identify 15 CSOs and provide them with the necessary skills to research and prepare shadow reports: the evaluation showed that the quality of CSO research had been improved but that more could be done
- Provide the 15 CSOs with advocacy skills and teach them how to develop communication plans: the evaluation showed that lines of communication were now excellent and staff were developing innovative activities;
- Improve their access to parliament: the evaluation showed that more needed to be done to strengthen parliamentary engagement

Overall, the results had been impressive. The evaluation had also shown that this engagement had strengthened WFD-EU relationships and that, as a result, a new agreement had recently been signed with UNDP for additional work in Georgia funded by the EU. In this context, he pointed out that the Georgia programme itself had been built on TWC's work around access and advocacy processes with CSOs in Mozambique and Ukraine. He felt strongly that developing CSO engagement with parliaments and political parties should continue to be part of WFD's core work. Equally, past experience had shown that engagement with CSOs within a specific umbrella (eg. human rights) could prove more successful than trying to bring all CSOs together under one very broad umbrella.

George confirmed that recommendations of the Evaluation and lessons learnt would be shared with all WFD programme and political party staff in order to benefit future programming.

c) Ukraine

George Kunnath updated the Board on possible work in Ukraine. Early in the year, a briefing note had been developed following consultation with established Ukrainian partners. Unfortunately, the conclusion was that the situation on the ground made it impossible to take any work forward; a situation that remains unchanged. In the meantime, DFID had established a £10m fund to support Ukraine implement the IMF restructuring plan. Following discussions with fund managers, it had been agreed that there might be a parliamentary role for WFD but only post-parliamentary elections; political party work continued as Labour was currently working with social democratic parties in Ukraine.

George confirmed that WFD had engaged with ethnic and linguistic minorities in national parliaments. In the MENA region, one WFD project brought together the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Lebanese Parliament. In Ukraine, WFD's work with minorities included support for an NGO that was instrumental in passing a language bill that had recognised languages at the local level if spoken by 10% of the population (thus also recognising the Russian language in eastern Ukraine). This bill was rescinded by the new parliament following the events in Maidan Square that resulted in further discontent in the east of the country; the President vetoed the bill shortly afterwards. Nabila Sattar said that the parties also worked with such minorities; in the Western Balkans, one achievement had been an amendment to the constitution of Bosnia & Herzegovina.

d) Iraq

Given recent developments at the security level, Dina Melhem updated the Board on the current status of WFD's two programmes in Iraq – in Baghdad and in Erbil. These developments had raised concerns about the security of WFD staff and, in consequence, the progress of the programme as a whole. Dina outlined the measures taken to ensure the safety of WFD's Programme Manager based in Erbil. She was in constant communication with HMC in Erbil and the UN Women representative in Iraq, Frances Guy. Whilst HMC did not evacuate local staff, Frances mentioned that the policy of UN Women was to evacuate national staff only in extremis for a maximum of one month. The situation in Iraq continues to be closely monitored and WFD receives travel advice updates from HMC Erbil, which currently advises only essential travel. The situation in Iraq has highlighted the fact that WFD urgently needed to put in place its own security policy which would address such situations.

Operationally, the last few months have been difficult but the situation, though now slowly normalising, continues to be closely monitored. Activities are being adapted accordingly and events moved to safer locations as and when necessary. Support for WFD's work remains strong and, at a recent meeting with Dina at the House of Commons, senior staff from the Iraqi Parliament reaffirmed their support for the work and made enquiries about the possibility of future support.

e) International Development Committee enquiry into parliamentary strengthening

Anthony Smith reported on IDC's current enquiry into parliamentary strengthening. Following the mid-term evaluation and the Triennial Review, the IDC decided that it would be an opportune moment to undertake a brief inquiry into the subject and had invited written submissions from interested organisations and individuals, including WFD who had been name checked in the enquiry's terms of reference. Submission deadline was 7 October. Following discussion with all stakeholders, evidence would be drafted over the next few weeks and a draft paper circulated to Governors for final comment.

9. **Date of next meeting:** Wednesday, 19 November 2014

Chair.....
Date: 19 November 2014

**Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Governors held in Committee Room 19,
Palace of Westminster on Thursday 19 November 2014**

Present Ann McKechin MP (Vice Chair) – in the Chair
Ken Caldwell
Bronwen Manby
John Osmond
Andrew Rosindell MP
Rt Hon Sir Andrew Stunell MP
Pete Wishart

In attendance Anthony Smith CEO
Kate Fuller Conservative Party
Nabila Sattar Labour Party
Chris Levick Smaller Parties
Lucy Ahad Head, Human Rights & Democracy Dept, FCO
Emma Kouki Desk Officer, Democracy & Elections, HRDD, FCO
Tamara Moluch Minute Taker

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Henry Bellingham, Rushanara Ali and Paul Naismith.

2. Conflict of Interest Declarations - None declared.

3. Minutes of Board meetings (*Documents 1a-b*)

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 11 September 2014 were **APPROVED** and duly signed by the Vice-Chair.

With regards to the 'Implementation Status of Actions Points Agreed by the Board', the Board **NOTED** the progress made by parties under **ACTION POINT 0/FEB.14** and that WFD's M&E Adviser was working closely with all party officers. Considering the importance of this work for WFD's future programming, the Board asked for a report outlining progress and achievements to date.

ACTION POINT 1: A report outlining progress and achievements to date under the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat Joint Innovation Bid 2014-15 to be submitted to the February Board.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION

4. Chief Executive's Report (*Document 2*)

In introducing his first report, Anthony Smith said that the reports would generally address items not covered elsewhere in Board agendas and welcomed any suggestions on how format and

content might be improved. He highlighted the progress made on the four-part response to the Triennial Review, as approved by the Board in September, with particular reference to the development of WFD's strategic framework. He also reported improvements in both internal and external relationships; staff had responded positively to open communications and there had been good discussions with FCO/DFID around their understanding of WFD's work, how we could work together and what WFD could offer them.

The International Development Select Committee inquiry on Parliament Strengthening had begun to hear oral evidence, which had included references to WFD. Because of the potential impact of this inquiry on WFD, Anthony stressed the importance of demonstrating that WFD fully understood the concerns raised to ensure that WFD's work continued to be fully supported. He confirmed he would be giving oral evidence on 25 November and would be happy to receive guidance from the Board about any key points that should be made.

Anthony confirmed the recruitment of a new Director of Programmes and that, as WFD moved towards the next funding period, plans were being developed on how staffing could be strengthened whilst keeping overheads at current levels.

Ann McKechin welcomed the work to date and, in particular, the round-table discussion on "Democracy in the Doldrums? What next for parliamentary and party support?" organised, as part of work to develop WFD's strategy, to gather input from Governors, practitioners, researchers and external stakeholders, around the context for parliamentary and political party assistance and the upcoming challenges and opportunities for WFD.

In response to Pete Wishart, Anthony confirmed that, as requested at the last Board Meeting, he had met with party officers to agree an alternative to the Triennial Review recommendations concerning party funding allocations. This had been discussed and commented on by the parties and copied to the FCO. Unfortunately, Emma Kouki said that the Triennial Review would not now be published as expected in time for WFD's oral evidence hearing at the Select Committee on 25 November.

Lucy Ahad said she would convey to Ministers the Board's concerns about the delay and the Board **AGREED** that Anthony Smith should meet informally with Ministers to stress the Board's concerns about the delays in publishing the Triennial Review and the adverse effect this was having on WFD's ability to finalise its Strategy and Business Plan for 2015-16.

5. **Strategic Framework** (*Document 3*)

Anthony Smith introduced the discussion paper on WFD's Strategic Framework 2015-18 which focused on:

- WFD's unique strengths, approaches and potential of WFD
- an approach to programming that built on those strengths;
- a collaborative process with FCO and DFID to decide on geographic focus of activities, matching ambition with available resources;
- addressing some common critiques about parliamentary assistance, including the need for evidence.

Discussion revolved around the questions posed:

WFD Strategic Framework 2015-18

- *WFD's aims have not kept pace with our work, eg. they do not mention 'parliaments'. Do we need a clear vision or purpose, eg. 'Politics matter to people. WFD's purpose is to help parliaments and parties in developing and transition countries to build the skills, expertise and democratic culture they need to provide include decision-making and democratic accountability for their citizens?'*
- *The proposed 'Tenets' cover parliaments, parties and civil society and women. Are Governors happy with what they cover and how they describe WFD's approach?*

In agreeing the vision, the Board said that WFD should remain as focused as possible and not over-extend itself. As to the 'Tenets', which reflected the current political context of WFD's work, the Board asked that 'youth' also be covered.

The British democratic experience

- *Have we adequately captured the most relevant characteristics of the British political system?*
- *Should the British link be WFD's explicit unique selling point? Are there risks in this approach?*
- *How would we sell WFD in countries that do not have an historical link to the Westminster model?*

The Board agreed that the British democratic experience should be at the heart of WFD's work but that it should not be seen as a 'purveyor of the ultimate democratic model that all should emulate'. They agreed that WFD had something unique and valuable to offer and, whilst it should not be afraid of promoting this, it should recognise other democratic experiences.

Whilst emphasising the importance of its British link, WFD's unique selling point and its strength lay in its understanding and insight of the British system with its richness, depth and long history as well as its access to British parliamentarians, including the important work being undertaken by the parties in regional peer-to-peer learning. WFD had to nurture and cherish its British links without being prescriptive and draw on that experience as it provided the best available advice, guidance and support in its democracy building activities.

The Westminster model was copied and admired internationally and WFD was in a unique position to share that vast range of democratic experiences without being prescriptive about how countries should or should not develop their own democratic systems. The sharing of this experience internationally was one of WFD's unique selling points as seen, for example, in its work with regional networks where experience, support and knowledge was being shared directly between member parliaments, political parties and organisations, regardless of any historical links to the Westminster model. To reinforce the Westminster image, Andrew Rosindell suggested that WFD adopt a stronger Westminster-identifiable logo.

WFD's core programming model (2015-18)

- *Does this four-part programming model match the reality of WFD's skills and experience and provide an adequate focus for our future programmes?*
- *The programming diagram does not try to fix the scale of each of the four elements but does support the gradual establishment of a significant 'parties in parliament' element. This will also be covered in one of the recommendations of the Triennial Review. Do Governors agree with this?*
- *Do the 6 proposed elements of WFD's approach respond adequately to the main critiques of WFD's past practices (and those of other providers of assistance in this field)?*

Whilst agreeing the 'four-part programme model', the Board felt that the fourth element - the 'democratic environment' - was potentially very broad and that its focus should be narrowed to avoid WFD stretching itself too thinly. In this context, the TWC model of working with parliaments and parties as part of a bigger picture requiring close collaboration with other organisations should be considered.

The Board agreed the gradual establishment of a significant 'parties in parliament' element. In noting the need to strike a balance between the long timescale of democracy building and the need to evidence results, it was agreed that the strategy could not be constrained by the limitations of evidencing impact within a three-year funding period, recognising that a strength of WFD's and of its political party work in particular was its longevity and sustainability.

The Board agreed that the six proposed elements of WFD's approach responded adequately to the main critiques of WFD's past practices.

Geographic scope

- *Do Governors agree with the proposed distinction between allowing a relatively broad geographic operation for sister party programmes on the one hand, and a collaborative exercise with the FCO and DFID to determine our initial priority countries for parliamentary and parties in parliament programmes on the other hand?*
- *Do Governors agree that a phased approach is appropriate, or should WFD try to start fresh with completely new programmes from 1 April 2015?*
- *Does the proposed % of transitioning, core, and new countries match the Board's expectations? If not, what would be a better mix?*

The Board agreed the need for dialogue with FCO and DFID to determine priority countries, whilst noting that the sister-party work could appear far more broadly spread than the parliamentary strengthening work but that this could be misleading where countries were represented through regional networks rather than individual projects. Whilst assuring greater focus, it was also agreed a certain degree of flexibility was required.

The Board also agreed a phased approach to its new programmes.

6. Review of Board Functioning

The Board agreed to:

1. Delegate to the CEO the authority to approve party and parliamentary project and programme proposals. The CEO shall establish a transparent process and criteria for approval, which will be reviewed by the Board annually. The initial process (see Annex) shall start to be used in January 2015
2. Establish a Programme Quality Committee to maintain an overview of programme quality and impact across party and parliamentary work. The CEO shall propose Terms of Reference of the Committee to the next meeting of the Board, which will determine its membership. The effectiveness of the Committee shall be reviewed by the Board within 12 months of this Decision.

3. Limit standing attendees of Board meetings to the CEO, the Finance Director and the Board Secretary. However, the Board may invite others, notably staff from the political party offices and WFD parliamentary programme staff, to attend for specific agenda items.

Andrew Rosindell disagreed with the third decision above.

The Board noted a range of other proposals to improve its functioning and asked the CEO to prepare a paper on ways of implementing these for its next meeting. This should include proposals on the frequency and timing of its meetings.

ACTION POINT 2: Anthony Smith to (i) begin implementing the new project approval process from January 2015, (ii) work with Board members on the Terms of Reference of the new Programme Quality Committee for submission to the February Board and (iii) submit a paper to the February Board on other actions to improve Board functioning.

7. **Review of Risk** *(Document 4)*

The Board **NOTED** that, following the meeting of the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee, a Risk Group had been established within WFD to ensure effective identification and management of risks and that some action had already been taken to implement a number of outstanding relevant recommendations.

ACTION POINT 3: The Board welcomed the creation of an organisation-wide Risk Group and looked forward to an update on its work at the next Board meeting.

8. **Strategic Programme for Approval** *(Document 5)*

The Board **APPROVED** the Labour proposal 'Women's Academy For Africa: Training the trainers' (budget £137,260) and noted that, whilst this activity had been intended as a part of a larger programme of work scheduled for the next FY, Labour had taken advantage of the delays to their scheduled work in the MENA region to kick start this programme of work.

9. **Audit & Risk Assurance Committee** *(Document 6)*

The Board **NOTED** the minutes of the 4 November 2014 meeting of the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee and, in particular, the establishment of the Risk Group referred to under Agenda Item 7 above. They also noted that the Committee would closely monitor the accounting error reported in the Kenya programme.

10. **Terms & Conditions Committee** *(Document 7)*

In introducing the minutes of the Terms & Conditions Committee, Ann McKechin reported that a consultant had now been engaged to assist in preparing staff work in high risk areas and that

WFD’s Health & Safety policy, being integral to WFD’s work, would now be reviewed and updated at regular intervals. The Board **NOTED** the minutes.

11. **Quarterly management report** (*Document 8*)

The Board **WELCOMED** the proposed format of the quarterly reports aimed at coherently demonstrating progress to date and reporting performance management by focusing on key issues affecting performance, including budget analysis and management processes. Governors were asked to submit any comments/suggestions they may have to Anthony Smith who would be presenting the first of the quarterly reports to the Board meeting in February.

12. **Any other business** – None.

13. **Date of next meeting:** To be confirmed.

Chair.....
Date: 4 February 2015



Project and Programme Approval Process

Revised version: 8 December 2014

Acronyms

WFD	Westminster Foundation for Democracy
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
DFID	Department for International Development
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation

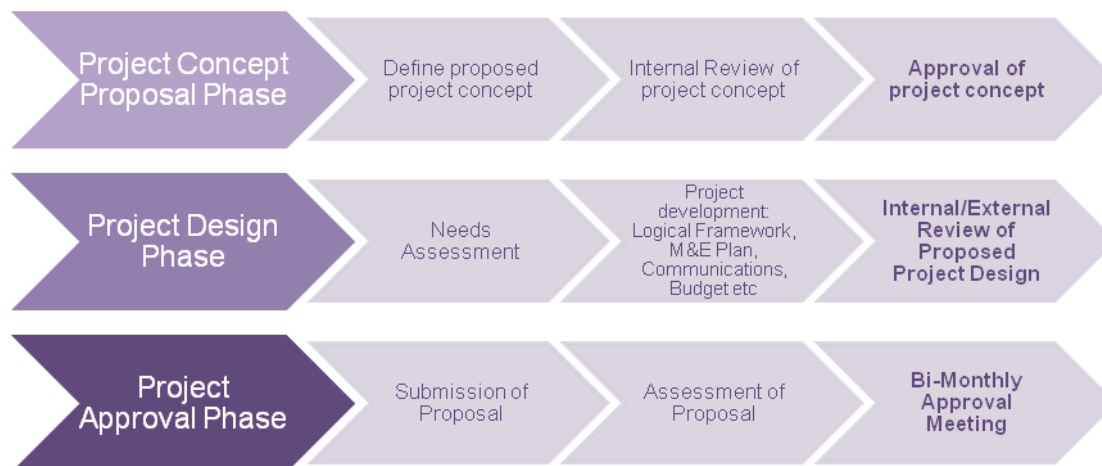
Introduction

This document sets out the process for approval of WFD projects/programmes. Most projects/programmes will be funded by the FCO/DFID core grant. In the case of projects/programmes to be funded through other channels, the time available might not allow the full procedures to be followed. In those cases, staff should follow the standard process as far as possible (see Programme Management Manual for further guidance).

Funding cycle

For the 2015/16 – 2017/18 funding cycle our aim is to agree a phased approach as set out in the paper on the Strategic Framework for the 19 November Board. That means that preparation and approval of projects/programmes will take place throughout the year. When negotiations with the FCO and DFID have advanced we will be able to forecast the approval workload.

Phases of Project/Programme Approval



Proposals

There are three types of proposals:

- Concept proposals – these will set out the strategic case for the intervention (why it is needed, why WFD), the main objectives and a range of possible budgets. They should include a description of how the project/programme proposal would be developed, i.e. elaboration of adequate detail on outputs, activities and management arrangements and, if necessary, refinement of the objectives. A proposed budget for any preparatory work (i.e. needs assessment visit, baseline study etc.) should be included.
- Programme proposals – a programme could cover a range of projects, e.g. across a geographic region. The individual programmes would be managed with a single overarching set of objectives and resources could be vired between them in order to maximise impact. The proposal will set out a full explanation of the programme's strategic case, objectives, outputs, activities and management arrangements.
- Project proposals – a project is a discrete set of activities, usually focused on one location or theme. A proposal for a stand-alone project would need to set out a full explanation of the project's strategic case, objectives, outputs, activities and management arrangements. Projects that form part of a wider programme concept that has already been approved do not need an additional concept proposal and other elements (e.g the strategic case, could cross-refer to relevant parts of the programme documents).

Review of proposals

- Internal Review
 - a) Concept Review – Concept proposals will be reviewed internally by the Director of Programmes, M&E specialist and Finance to ensure relevancy and affordability. A minimum of one week should be allocated for review of proposal prior to its submission¹.
 - b) Programme/Project Proposal Review – Programme/project proposals will be reviewed internally by the Director of Programmes, M&E specialist, Communications, and Finance to ensure relevancy, likelihood of impact, quality and affordability.

Feedback should be on a standard form that sets out the issues to be reviewed, e.g.:

- Relevance to WFD’s purpose and objectives
 - Likelihood of impact, ie adequate use of evidence, demand and ownership, robust theory of change, effective implementation plans
 - Quality of monitoring and evaluation plans
 - Affordability
- External Review - Final proposals will be sent to FCO and DFID for comments.

Submission of proposals

Approval Committee meetings will normally be held every two months, on the 30th. Proposals must be submitted by the 15th of that month (please see ‘Approval of proposals’ below). In the event that the submission date falls on a non-working day, the proposal should be submitted on the first working day following the submission date. In the event that Committee meeting dates fall on a non-working day or a Friday or during parliamentary recess, the meeting will be rescheduled to the closest practical date. Taking account of this, the timetable for 2015 is as follows:

Bi-monthly Meetings	Due date for submission	Date of Approval Committee Meeting
January	15 January	29 January
March*	18 February	4 March
June**	21 May	4 June
July	15 July	30 July
November	16 November	30 November

Proposals should be submitted in electronic format only by email to the Secretary of the Approval Committee (tbd).

Assessment of proposals

Constructive assessment of all proposals is essential to (i) enable learning, (ii) promote adoption of good practice, and (iii) ensure consistency across WFD’s portfolio.

Each proposal will be assessed by the Approval Committee during the two weeks from submission of proposal (15th of month) to approval committee meeting (30th of month). The proposal should include the review comments and the proposed response.

¹ Failure to provide sufficient time for review process may result in the proposal delayed to next scheduled submission deadline.

* March 2015 PAC Meeting has been rescheduled for early March ahead of the dissolution of Parliament on [30 March 2015](#).

** May 2015 PAC Meeting has been rescheduled for early June following the parliamentary elections on [7 May 2015](#).

Approval of proposals

Following assessment, proposals would be considered by the Approval Committee.

The Approval Committee will consist of:

CEO

Governor (political party)

Governor (independent)

The Director of Finance, Director of Programmes, M&E Advisor as well as political party officers, Heads of Programme, and programme officers would attend as appropriate. There would be appropriate safeguards in case of confidentiality of political party proposals and to avoid conflict of interest.

The Committee is advisory in nature and the Governors will be nominated by the Board but serve in their personal capacity, normally for a two-year term. The Committee will seek to reach consensus on each decision. However, since the Board has delegated project approval to him, final decisions are for the CEO. The committee will use a standard assessment sheet to ensure consistency of approach.

The committee will meet on a bi-monthly basis in line with the timetable above (i.e. 5 times per year) to consider proposals. For proposals made at other times, the Committee may agree to receive proposals via email under exceptional circumstances. The Committee will develop appropriate procedures for approval of project extensions.