

**The Westminster Foundation for Democracy Limited**  
Company Number 2693163

**Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Governors held in Committee Room 19,  
Palace of Westminster, on Wednesday, 4 September 2013**

**Present**

Gary Streeter (Chair)  
Rushanara Ali MP  
Bronwen Manby  
Ann McKechin MP (Vice Chair)  
John Osmond  
Rt Hon Sir Andrew Stunell MP  
Pete Wishart MP

**In attendance**

Linda Duffield	Chief Executive
Paul Naismith	Company Secretary/Director of Finance
Marina Narnor	Head of Africa & Asia Team
George Kunnath	Director of TWC and Head of Europe Team
Dina Melhem	Head of MENA Team
Philippa Broom	Conservative Party
Nabila Sattar	Labour Party
Iain Gill	Liberal Democrats
Louise de Sousa	Head, Human Rights & Democracy Department, FCO
Simon Jones	Team Leader, Democracy & Programmes Team, FCO
Mark Brownjohn	WFD/Elections, HRDD, FCO
David Osborne	Political Governance Adviser, DFID
Tamara Moluch	Minute Taker

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from Tina Fahm, Andrew Rosindell and Ken Caldwell, recently appointed Independent Governor. Chris Levick, Smaller Parties, also sent his apologies.

Gary Streeter **welcomed** Chris Harmer, WFD's newly appointed Communications Manager, to her first Board meeting.

Gary Streeter announced that this would be his last Board meeting as he had now completed three terms in office and would be stepping down as Governor and Chair of the Board. The Board thanked Gary for his very constructive contribution to the work of WFD and looked forward to working closely with his successor, Henry Bellingham MP, once his appointment was confirmed. Governors would formally appoint a new Chairman at the next Board meeting.

2. **Conflict of Interest Declarations** - None declared.

3. **Minutes of Board meetings** (Document 1)

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 26 June 2013, being an accurate record of the meeting, were **APPROVED** and duly signed by the Chair.

4. **Matters arising** (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)

Gary Streeter reported that the **report on the closure of the Bangladesh programme** had been circulated to Governors, staff and party officers and its recommendations would be taken forward as part of all future programming.

**ACTION POINT 1: The consultation procedure on draft programme proposals involving Governors, the CEO and DFID/FCO had been trialled for a further quarter.** As only four Governors had commented on the draft programme proposals being presented to the Board for approval, Gary Streeter reminded the Board that a decision would need to be taken on whether to continue the current system.

**ACTION POINT 3 (APRIL):** Further to Ann McKechin's suggestion to form a '**Friends of The Westminster Foundation for Democracy**' group to promote the work of WFD and build a support base within Westminster and further afield, the Board welcomed Ann's proposal that, as a first step, she and Linda Duffield would arrange to meet The Speaker of the House.

## 5. External Evaluators' Annual Review of WFD 2012-13 and Strategic Review of Programmes (Document 2)

Linda Duffield introduced the External Evaluators' first Annual Review of WFD's programmes funded by FCO and DFID. This was an important document that acknowledged the good work achieved across the organisation whilst at the same time highlighting some significant points for future action. The Annual Review was primarily based on documentary evidence and London-based interviews reflecting the relatively short time available to the External Evaluators. A more in-depth assessment would follow during the mid-year review scheduled for early next year, and subsequent annual reviews.

Linda said that she would take forward discussions with staff and party officers on the recommendations set out in the Annual Review and agree action points and priorities. It was clear that WFD needed to increase the pace of reform over the coming months. She highlighted key areas for improvement, some of which were already being addressed, whilst others would require more substantial changes to the way WFD worked and therefore time to implement:

- *The need to clearly define WFD's niche in the field of parliamentary and party-to-party assistance.* Linda said that WFD had something unique to offer. WFD should look at promoting its niche more effectively and also ensure its business model was able to deliver this.
- *Stepping up progress towards integrating WFD's parliamentary and party programmes in country.* Linda noted that whilst WFD might not be able to integrate all its programmes, there was potential for greater integration of work. Discussions were currently underway with regional teams and parties to pilot two new joined-up programmes and also to look at those countries where multiple programmes were currently underway and identify shared high level goals to support more joined up work in the future.
- *The need for parties to move at a faster pace towards multi-year strategic programming.* Linda recognised that the parties needed additional support to take this work forward and noted the draft proposal from party officers which outlined ways in which this could be done. This proposal would be considered in consultation with WFD's M&E Adviser and party officers and a final proposal put to the Board for approval.
- *The need to step up delivery and improve financial forecasting.* Whilst the programme teams had invested extensively in programme design to ensure they delivered clear change goals, they now needed to quicken the pace of delivery and improve financial forecasting.
- *WFD to consider a shift from training and knowledge sharing towards long-term capacity development including coaching, mentoring etc. as a way of supporting and embedding long-term change.* Linda pointed out that coaching and advice already formed part of the work of the parties and regional teams but WFD should consider whether it could build on this more effectively.

In the discussion that followed, Andrew Stunell urged DFID and FCO to recognise more fully WFD's unique selling point - the direct access to the skills, experience and knowledge of the UK political parties, including MPs. He welcomed the strategic multi-year approach but cautioned against an expectation that results would follow immediately. Politics worked very differently. WFD's work represented a long-term investment in political reform and development and only small changes could realistically be expected in a three-year period. This would also need to be reflected in WFD's M&E framework.

Both Andrew Stunell and Ann McKechin stressed the need to recognise that WFD worked in countries where there was high risk of failure well beyond WFD's control. Ann suggested there was a need to differentiate between the various activities being undertaken; each with their own specific objectives and approaches. For example, parliamentary work dealt with current leadership and established parliamentary institutions whilst party-to-party work addressed future leaders and, as a long-term goal, the desire to change the nature of political organisations. She also stressed the importance of listening to the people WFD worked with and recognising their differing needs.

Bronwen Manby welcomed the Annual Review's emphasis on multi-year joined-up programmes based on in-depth political context analysis. This should apply across the whole organisation. She acknowledged the need for long time lines to measure effective political change but suggested that clearer programme objectives could help measure progress towards these longer-term goals. Bronwen questioned what was meant by the recommendation for an even closer alignment of WFD's objectives with those of the FCO and DFID. WFD was intended to be an arms-length body with its own strategic objectives.

John Osmond noted that delivering context driven programmes would require considerable collaborative effort across the whole organisation. It might also require a redirection of funding to drive joined up programmes and deliver long-term change.

Rushanara Ali said there should be greater recognition of the differences in WFD's work compared to traditional DFID programmes. She asked if Embassies could share more information and political analysis with WFD not only in the programme development phase but throughout the programme delivery period.

Louise de Sousa said the FCO welcomed the External Evaluators' Review, which she had discussed with the Minister for Europe. She acknowledged the good progress made by WFD in terms of greater strategic focus and the move towards multi-year programming and said the FCO had a high regard for WFD's unique contribution in support of the FCO's own international goals. WFD had embarked on a highly ambitious process of change, promising in its Business Case a greater strategic focus, technical expertise, better coordination and greater impact. This remained paramount to WFD's success and the recommendations of the External Evaluators were in line with this vision. Key challenges for the next two years were:

- fine-tuning the strategic focus of WFD, including adopting multi-year programming across the whole organisation;
- strong political context analysis to inform programmes at the start;
- improving cooperation between parliamentary and party-to-party work to achieve maximum impact;
- capturing the benefits and demonstrating WFD's impact through improved M&E processes.

Louise added that WFD had shared goals with the FCO and DFID around building democracy and democratic institutions especially in fragile states but that, as an arms-length body of the FCO, WFD set its own strategy and priorities. However, it would be helpful if WFD could share political analysis, choice of priority countries, baseline studies etc. with the FCO at an early stage. Such cooperation would help long-term programme sustainability as well as the development of strong networks and relationships. FCO Posts were keen to support WFD in this. In summary, Louise believed that WFD had the potential to become a world leader in democracy assistance and that the changes it had embarked upon would make an enormous contribution to achieving this.

David Osborne also welcomed the Board's comments which he would pass on to the External Evaluators. He acknowledged the short time scale between their first Annual Review and the mid-term review in early 2014 which would also concentrate more fully on Output 4 - structure and organisation. Highlighting some additional points in the Annual Review, David noted positively WFD's ability to 'fail fast' and move on when programmes were not delivering. This was very important in such a risk-driven environment. He said that context driven analysis would facilitate more joined-up work and could lead

to a different mix of party-to-party, cross-party and parliamentary work according to need. He confirmed that DFID would also be happy to share its analysis with WFD and possibly even undertake joint-analysis in the future. Commenting on the reference in the Review to '80% of party funding' being allocated to multi-year programmes, he noted this was WFD's own agreed policy for 2013.

In the party presentations that followed:

Philippa Broom highlighted the work of the **Conservative Party** in the Maldives where since 2007 support had been given to the Maldives Democratic Party to transform it from a mass membership movement to a policy-based political party. The success of the early work was further evidenced by the fact that, following the coup in 2012, the party had been able to spring back and run a professional election campaign based on a policy-based manifesto supported by a strong grass roots structure. Elections were scheduled for 7 September; elections which Philippa was confident would not have been possible without the direct assistance of the Conservatives.

Iain Gill highlighted the work of the **Liberal Democrats** in their support for the Africa Liberal Network (ALN) with a current membership of 34 liberal democratic parties – in government, in opposition and some embryonic. Assistance had included policy-based support, skills exchange and strategy development workshops both on the regional and national levels. Members encouraged each other to adopt best practice and smaller countries were safe in the knowledge that they had the full support of the ALN. The Liberal Democrats had also established a youth programme in South Africa targeting youth from poor, rural and/or disadvantaged communities who had shown an interest in politics.

Nabila Sattar spoke of the work of the **Labour Party** in developing and supporting regional networks. Assistance to Tha'era, a network of social democratic parties in the MENA region (see Agenda item 7) provided training around political action which would be rolled out at the national and local levels. Work with the Political Youth Academy in Eastern Europe had strengthened the network of social democrats in the region and improved individual skills. The Regional Women's Academy for Africa had grown into a vibrant 'virtual' network through which member parties and individuals shared knowledge, best practice and experience and accessed online training tools to help women engage in politics. There was strong emphasis on value for money across all programmes.

Pete Wishart spoke of the work of the **Smaller Parties** which, by their very nature, required greater concentration and focus in fewer priority countries over a sustained period of time. The aim was to allocate limited resources strategically to deliver greatest impact. Particular attention was given to niche areas such as devolution and decentralisation, and youth programmes. Cooperation between the Smaller Parties and countries with shared and established historic footprints was particularly effective.

The Board welcomed these presentations and urged that they be effectively documented. David Osborne stressed the importance of preparing case studies of this type of party work.

Iain Gill said that party officers had prepared a draft proposal aimed at bringing M&E expertise directly into the party offices. This followed up on the parties' recent meeting with IRI/NDI where the importance of a dedicated and permanent M&E team had been strongly emphasised. The aim was to: improve programme design; develop professional M&E; provide party staff with necessary training and skill sets; and improve communication and promotion of party work.

Linda Duffield said she would look at the parties' proposal in consultation with WFD's M&E Adviser and follow-up with the party officers.

Summing up the discussion, Gary Streeter stressed the importance of WFD's work and the changes it was making. He was confident that WFD was closer than ever in bridging the gap between the two sides of the organisation.

6. **Quarterly Progress Report in line with M&E Framework (April to June 2013)** (Document 3)

Linda Duffield introduced the **Quarterly Progress Report (April to June 2013)**. The Board had agreed WFD should adopt quarterly monitoring across all its programmes with effect from this FY. These reports were intended primarily as a management tool for senior programme staff and the senior management team. They would help track progress of both externally funded programmes and of programmes funded by DFID and FCO and allow corrective action to be taken swiftly where necessary. The quarterly reports were attached for the Board's information.

Governors found the summaries particularly useful, particularly as it provided a better understanding of the work of the political parties. Linda Duffield confirmed that field staff were now in place in Nigeria and Pakistan. However, the recruitment of field staff for WFD's two regional MENA programmes had been delayed. The intention had been to base operations in Beirut where the regional parliamentary training centre was based and supporting democratic reform in the Arab World. The current political situation and the wider regional instability had made this difficult and recent training activities had had to be switched from Beirut to other locations. A decision would be taken shortly as to where to locate the regional team – probably Jordan - and recruitment would begin shortly.

The Board **NOTED** the report.

7. **Approval of programmes over £20,000** (Document 4)

On a general note, Linda Duffield said that comments from the M&E Adviser for strengthening programme design, monitoring and evaluation were intended to help the parties rethink the way they designed future programmes, providing greater clarity of long-term results which in turn would help better define the indicators and milestones and facilitate M&E. Linda said that Kate Bunbury's role was to develop an M&E framework and strengthen M&E tools and systems across the whole organisation. She had also worked closely with programme staff to strengthen individual programme design and M&E was willing to provide similar support and advice to the parties. As agreed, a new programme template was also being developed to support stronger design and M&E processes.

**AI Africa-wide & ROW: Youth UK Spring School** **APPROVED**  
(*Conservatives Party-to-Party*)  
Total budget: **£117,450.00**

Philippa Broom said that the proposal fell under Output 2.2 'Regional Networks and Best Practice' which received 24% of the party's overall budget. She also said that help had not been sought from the M&E Adviser because of capacity issues.

Rushanara Ali and Gary Streeter highlighted the long-term value of initiatives that helped build networks and sustain relationships. Conferences provided unique opportunities at a relatively small cost for a wide range of people – from young activists to senior leaderships – and it was important not to be too prescriptive in the choice of countries as there was immense value in bringing all people together. The next stage would be to think about how to take these relationships forward and how the infrastructures that were being set up could facilitate further dialogue. WFD should not only be supporting such interventions but actively enhancing them. It was agreed that a better explanation of the overarching goals of this type of proposal would help demonstrate their strategic value.

**EI Montenegro: Local Election Capacity Development** **APPROVED**  
(*Labour Party-to-Party*)  
Total budget: **£35,580.00**

**MI MENA-wide: Tha'era: Empowering Arab Women** **APPROVED**  
(*Labour Party-to-Party*)  
Total budget: **£128,702.00**

John Osmond raised concerns about the Board approving this major long-term programme when the MENA team were already providing long-term support to women in the same region. Ann McKechin saw these two programmes as complementary – the MENA team programme supported women parliamentarians whereas the Labour programme supported party members. Each programme was targeting different groups of women. She stressed the importance of supporting women at all levels and agreed there should be closer dialogue between the Labour Party and the MENA team.

Bronwyn Manby agreed the need for closer coordination and shared context analysis. She also raised concerns about whether there might be a need to adapt the proposal to take on board the rapidly changing regional political context and adjust priorities accordingly. Nabila Sattar confirmed that the security situation was being monitored closely and that the programme would be reviewed and amended as and when necessary. Rushanara Ali noted there was a difficult balancing act for those working in the MENA region given the current political upheaval and the need to continue this important ground work.

Linda Duffield agreed that more dialogue was needed between the regional teams and parties. This proposal presented a perfect opportunity for the MENA team and Labour to sit down together and review how the two programmes could support wider reform and the empowerment of women across the region; they were focusing on different aspects of the same problem and it should be easy to develop an overarching framework for the two programmes.

The Board **AGREED** the proposal on the understanding that a linkage between the two women-related programmes be made.

**ACTION POINT 1: Labour and the MENA team to meet as soon as possible to develop an overarching framework for their two programmes supporting the empowerment of women across the region. This should set out shared strategic goals and identify possible areas for future cooperation and coordination between the two programmes.**

**8. Approve new Management Statement & Financial Memorandum between FCO and WFD (Document 5)**

Linda Duffield introduced the new **Management Statement** which reflected recent guidance from the Cabinet Office on the overall management and relationship between sponsor departments and their non-departmental public bodies and the **Financial Memorandum** which reflected updated Treasury guidance on managing public money. As in previous framework documents (2004), the new documents set out the relationship between WFD and FCO, the Board and FCO and the CEO and FCO.

The Board **APPROVED** the revised **Management Statement & Financial Memorandum between FCO and WFD** subject to the following amendment:

1<sup>st</sup> bullet point of para.6.3 - replace 'establishing, in agreement with...' by 'establishing, **in consultation with...**' reflecting the longstanding practice that WFD consulted with the FCO (and others) on strategy, corporate and annual business plans but that these were ultimately approved by the Board, rather than FCO.

**Reports for Information**

**A. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

The Board **NOTED** that the Audit and Terms & Conditions Committees had not met since the last Board meeting in June 2013.

**B. Other Reports**

- a) **Chief Executive's report** (Document 6) - The Board **NOTED** the report.
- b) **Programmes approved since April 2013 meeting of the Board** (Document 7a) - The Board **NOTED** the report.
- c) **External funding proposals at bidding / concept stage** (Document 7b) - The Board **NOTED** the report.
- d) **Summary of all programme commitments from April 2012 to date** (Document 7c) - The Board **NOTED** the report.
- e) **List of open / closed projects and programmes** (Document 7d) - The Board **NOTED** the report.
- f) **Finance Director's report** (Document 8) - Paul Naismith emphasised the need for better forecasting and highlighted possible risks related to the underspend in the first part of the year.
- g) **Risk Dashboard update to end-July 2013** (Document 9a) - The Board **NOTED** the report and in particular the fact that WFD was currently operating outside WFD's risk appetite in relation to its IT system. Paul Naismith assured the Board that this applied temporarily during the planned upgrade of its IT system; once complete, the risk level would return to normal.
- h) **Risk Appetite Statement** (Document 9b) - The Board **APPROVED** the Risk Appetite Statement as a true and accurate record of discussions held at the June 2013 Board meeting.
- i) **Freedom of information requests** - The Board **NOTED** that none had been received in this quarter.
- j) **Details of programmes for publication on website** (Document 10) - The Board **NOTED** the report and **AGREED** the one exemption.
- k) **Updated Terms of Reference and Membership for Board and Committees** (Document 11) - The Board **NOTED** the document. It also **AGREED** the following appointments:

<u>Terms &amp; Conditions Committee</u>	Ann McKechin MP John Osmond	Chair Member
<u>Audit Committee</u>	Andrew Stunell MP	Member

**ACTION POINT 2: The Conservative Party to prepare a case study of its long-term DUA Africa-wide Programme.**

- 9. **Any other business** – None
- 10. **Date of next meeting: Wednesday, 20 November 2013 at 09.30h**

Chair

  
Date: 20 November 2013