

Natural England Board



Meeting: 20
Date: 26 May 2010

Paper No: **NEB PU20 03**

Title: **Annual Report and Annual Review 2009/10**

Sponsor: **Dave Webster, Executive Director Corporate Services**

1. Purpose

1.1. The purpose of this paper is to give the Board the opportunity to review the first drafts of the Annual Report and Annual Review for 2009/10.

2. Recommendations

2.2 It is recommended that the Board:

- feedback any comments on the current drafts of the Annual Report and Annual Review;
- Agree to delegate the clearance of the accounts to the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) at its meeting on 14 June followed up with any further changes to the text and/or the figures to be approved by Chair of ARC, Chair and Chief Executive as Accounting Officer before the accounts are laid in Parliament before recess.

3. Report

3.1 The Annual Report is part of the Annual Report and Accounts which is required to be laid in Parliament before the summer recess. The Annual Review is a publication based on the Annual Report material which is in a user friendly format and is used for our stakeholders and partners. The 2009/10 Accounts which are subject to audit by the National Audit Office (NAO) will not be available for Board review until the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) on 14th June.

3.2 The latest version of Annual Report is attached at Annex 1 and the Annual Review is attached at Annex 2. Board members are invited to provide comments on these documents. It would be helpful if Board members can provide detailed comments to Executive Director Corporate Services outside the meeting given the limited time available for this item. Comments on the Annual Review document on the likely perspective of stakeholders, partners and the private sector would be very welcome.

3.3 The Chair of the ARC and Ian Scott (external support to ARC) will review the Annual Report and Accounts in detail on 1 June with Executive Director, Corporate Services and the Finance team. The NAO will report their audit findings to the ARC on 14 June. The Chair and Chair of the ARC propose

that the Board delegates the clearance of the accounts to the ARC at its meeting on 14 June followed up with any further changes to the text and/or the figures to be approved by Chair of ARC, Chair and Chief Executive as Accounting Officer before the accounts are laid in Parliament before recess in July. Clearly if significant substantive issues arise then these will be brought to the Board's attention. Our target is that the Comptroller and Auditor General will then sign the accounts in week commencing 21 June and we plan to lay the accounts before Parliament on 5 July.