

BSL Advisory Panel – Approved Minutes

Meeting 18

Time and date	9:30 – 13:00, Thursday 3 rd June 2021
Venue	Conference Call
Date of Issue	Thursday 10 th June 2021

1) Welcome and Housekeeping

The Chair welcomed the Panel Members.

See Appendix A for attendees and apologies.

2) Approval of Minutes

The BSL Administrator advised that comments were received by Luke Bailey on the Draft Minutes of Panel 17 regarding the Green Homes Grant. AH noted there was a sentence on page 3 of the Draft Minutes that needed to be amended. The BSL Administrator will amend and circulate the Draft Minutes of Panel 17 as final and an accurate record of the meeting.

3) Review of Outstanding Actions

The BSL Administrator presented the outstanding actions. The actions open are as follows:

Action 17-01 The BSL Administrator to continue to raise with Environment Agency (EA) the issue of changing the waste code definitions in the Waste Wood Part B Permit guidance. BSL Administrator and Panel Members have had a meeting with the EA regarding this action, which has been addressed under Agenda Item 10.

Action 17-04 JM-J to organise meeting for a sub-group of Panel Members to consider the future role of the Advisory Panel to take place following the completion of the review of the BSL Administrator contract tender responses. The Chair pointed out that this action has not been completed due to extensions in the stand-off period, but this action can be closed off as this is historical.

All other outstanding actions were closed.

4) BSL Administrator Announcement

Government Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) presented the BSL Administrator Announcement. Panel Members were made aware of the new contract up for tender and some Panel Members were involved in the discussions around what changes needed to be made for the new contract. Some Panel Members were involved in reviewing tenders where they declared no conflict of interest. There were four submissions that were assessed by five board members, three with biomass industry expertise and two with expertise in the Non-Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (NDRHI) Scheme.

The new contract has been awarded to Woodsure. BEIS expressed their sincere gratitude and thanks to Gemserv who have worked hard as the BSL Administrator these past years. BEIS also expressed their thanks to Panel Members involved in the tender process.

RL asked what changes have been made to the new contract. BEIS responded that there is now to be a stronger role for Panel Members with greater transparency of the BSL Contract budget.

5) BSL Administrator Introduction (2021-2023)

Woodsure presented the slides BSL_Panel_18_05.

The presentation introduced Woodsure, HETAS and their role as United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) Accredited Certification Body that manage various schemes for the biomass industry. Woodsure will implement changes (which are to be agreed with BEIS) to the BSL contract including more audits, reviewing all applications and data cleansing. They will update guidance information and have a phone line open 9-5pm Monday - Friday. There is also a requirement to share the BSL finances with Panel.

The Term of Office for the Advisory Panel ended December 2020, however there was discussion on extending the role of the Advisory Panel, when the existing Administrator contract terminates. The Chair and Panel Members supported this extension of the role of the Advisory Panel.

RL asked for Woodsure's reassurance that Self-Suppliers who do not work in the industry will be protected, where increasing standards may not be appropriate for them. Woodsure confirmed they will not add to the burden for Self-Suppliers. The Chair noted that ultimately BEIS will decide what is imposed on all suppliers, and the Panel is there to support BEIS in the decision-making process. The Panel welcomes input from the Self-Supplier representatives to ensure their needs are reflected.

IT questioned the reasoning behind more auditing as one of the proposed changes, and how far along the supply chain does Woodsure intend to audit (i.e., could this be at the woodland level). Woodsure responded that they are always finding issues at audit, generally the same issues crop up such as customer information. Historically, BSL authorisation aimed to bring as many suppliers into the BSL. Now that the application checks have been updated, there will need to be more audits to ensure the

legacy applications are compliant. There will also be a wider requirement for BSL suppliers on fuel quality which will need to be incorporated into the audit.

RL voiced concerns about credibility of the biomass industry; there are new renewable heat technologies entering the market all the time so we will need to maintain credibility as a viable sustainable source of renewable heat. This will need to be maintained via air quality and emissions standards/permits as well as the HETAS maintenance scheme. LC agreed that more audits are a good option to maintain credibility, particularly site audits that provide the supplier with a sense check.

BEIS also noted there is the air quality challenge with Government Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and that responses from the consultation on the Non-Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (NDRHI) will be analysed, helping to address air quality risks from biomass.

6) Priorities for the BSL

The Chair advised that the Panels Term of Office ended in December 2020 but has been extended to the end of June. The Chair asked Panel Members whether they would be prepared to extend the role, for continuity and to minimise further challenges through the transition period.

MS commented it would be useful to understand what the required make up is of the Panel through an election. IT is supportive of the extension and where Woodsure require the assistance of the Panel, he commented that they are happy to assist. RL is supportive of the extension and queried whether the next Panel meeting should be moved from July to a later month. Woodsure noted it would be a loss of knowledge for Panel if there was an election in July versus an extension of the existing Panel. BEIS noted there will be a review in the new contract to perhaps bring installers into the Panel.

The Chair asked whether the current Panel Members in the meeting are happy to agree to extend the role of the Panel through the transition period of three months. As there were not all members in attendance, the BSL Administrator took an action to ask all Panel Members if they agree to this.

<p>Panel Action 18-01</p>	<p>The BSL Administrator to contact Panel Members to ask whether they are happy to have extension of Panel membership for an additional three months to support the BSL contract transition period.</p>
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The Chair asked Woodsure what the challenges are through the transition period. Woodsure noted the main challenge is transitioning of systems. The priorities for Woodsure for the next few months include reviewing the guidance information for BSL suppliers and reviewing the charges for suppliers such as the 9 pence per tonne charge. Woodsure intend to review all the applications to make it easier for auditing. The BSL Administrator noted the transition period was intended to be three months, but it has been cut to a matter of weeks, highlighting the risks associated with this.

The Chair proceeded to present the slides BSL_Panel_18_06. The suggested priorities for the BSL in the shorter term include a smooth contract handover, website transition and to resolve the waste wood issue. In the medium term there will be a new database system, website, and election of the new Panel Members. In the longer term the priority will be the implementation of fuel quality standards.

RL noted there will need to be a communication plan for BSL suppliers and to inform customers about the transition to the new contract. RL asked about whether differentiating waste wood BSL numbers is a priority for the new Administrator and whether accounting for new technologies that resolve supply chain issues such as blockchain is also a priority. Woodsure and the Chair agreed these should be prioritised moving forward. BEIS noted that novating the BSL contract is also a priority, where the BSL Scheme may novate to become a company rather than a government scheme. A management team will be established going forward.

7) BEIS Update

BEIS presented an update regarding the biomass boiler maintenance standard which is being developed by Woodsure and HETAS. BEIS are also working with Ofgem on the regulations, with fuel quality coming in to legislation from 1st April 2022.

Tamper proof seals are to be introduced for any NDRHI technology to prevent leakages or tampering. Due to purdah, it was not possible to hold a stakeholder event on this. The Renewable Energy Association (REA) have informed government, but if Panel Members have any additional information, comments or queries they are invited to send this to BEIS.

There is a requirement to recalibrate heat meters every ten years or sooner depending on the manufacturer's specification and duty of care. This is not new information so BEIS did not need to consult on this, and Ofgem will sanction if there is non-compliance. LC commented there is a need to raise this publicly to increase awareness.

MS commented if there is more information required or if there are any queries the REA can assist.

Panel Action 18-02	MS to send recalibration of heat meters information to the BSL Administrator to share with Panel Members.
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RL asked BEIS about the biomass strategy [consultation](#). BEIS confirmed there is a biomass strategy team, and this consultation can be discussed in the Agenda Item 9.

8) Ofgem Update

AM provided the Ofgem Update. On the new BSL contract, Ofgem will assume business as usual online system service for customers. Ofgem are assessing the options on how best to administer the

recalibration of heat meters, any communications for customers and any decisions on what approach they will take will be communicated as soon as possible. Ofgem are keen to work with new Administrator on fuel quality standards, so the self-reporting requirements match the BSL requirements. AM also mentioned the review of tamper proof seals and maintenance.

Based on the feedback received from the BSL, AM presented the NDRHI statistics. At the point of closure there were ~17,000 biomass installations - 81% of all installations on the scheme. Over 1,500 applications (made up of all technologies) are under review following the closure. Under 200 applications have been sent back to the customer for more information.

Regarding the Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (DRHI) Scheme, biomass installations accounted for over 44% of total payments, and 13.9% of total installations. Once the seven-year period is over for one DRHI installation they are no longer accredited and there is no obligation for a biomass installation to use BSL registered fuels. They are only bound by local regional planning laws including air quality laws.

MS asked if there is publication data easy to access, relating to sites that are now no longer on the DRHI Scheme. There is a public perception problem where lots of government renewable heat schemes are finishing, and installations are no longer bound by sustainability. This is a concern to raise with BEIS.

LC commented there have been cases where biomass boilers are decommissioned following completion on the DRHI Scheme after seven years. These households can revert back to oil or fossil fuelled boilers unless they are convinced to carry on using biomass for heat. There needs to be more information and support for customers with their boilers and maintenance.

RL also raised concern over the fuel quality, sustainability, and air quality for the biomass industry when customers finish their time on the DRHI Scheme. Local authority regulation is misplaced, and the Clean Heat Grant (CHG) is targeted at heat pumps not biomass boilers. Without financial incentive there is risk of a lack of control over sustainability and the environment.

BEIS noted if any Panel Members have data relating to biomass boiler installations being removed and replaced with fossil fuel heating, to please send to BEIS.

Panel Action 18-03	Panel Members to send data to BEIS on specific cases where customers with biomass boilers have reverted back to fossil fuel heating, and subsequent reasoning behind this move.
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LC asked Ofgem about the issues associated with the Green Homes Grant (GHG) Scheme. BEIS is happy to invite relevant policy leads to future meetings to discuss the GHG Scheme.

The Chair noted there are concerns over boiler customers not being able to find the appropriate installers and boiler servicing providers. While appreciating confidentiality concerns, the question was

asked if there was a way industry could work with Ofgem to make information available to RHI participants about available services based on criteria such as boiler type.

LC commented that there are either customers with issues to do with maintenance/installers or there are customers who have unpleasant experiences. They may have been mis-sold boilers or parts. Maintenance standards also come at a cost to the consumer, which is something to consider, as well as what is going to happen to all the redundant biomass boilers.

MS is happy to collect data on such issues through the REA on biomass boilers, including bad experiences, mis-selling, lack of access to installers, potentially through a call for evidence.

9) BSL Activity Update (Q1 2021)

BSL Administrator presented the paper 18_09a. IT asked to share this with his colleagues. The BSL Panel Terms of Reference states “Discussions and materials will be confidential to the BSL Advisory Panel, though this does not exclude Members from sharing information within their own organisations in order to inform debate and facilitate particular actions that may arise from time to time.”

BSL Administrator presented the paper 18_09b on Panel Activity. Meetings have been held regarding the BSL B2C2 Calculator, concluding there is no requirement to amend the calculator. There have been two meetings on the Waste Wood Standard including participants from BEIS, Environment Agency (EA) and Ofgem, and the findings will be discussed under Agenda Item 10.

There are two vacant positions on the Panel. There was discussion about co-opting however if the Panel were to extend their membership until September 2021, they would not be allowed to co-opt for these two vacancies as this is anti-competitive and not in line with the Terms of Reference that would also be extended in line with their roles.

[The role of biomass in achieving net zero: call for evidence](#) consultation was also raised. It was highlighted that it is open until 15th June 2021. The Panel wished for the BSL Administrator to submit a response to this. This can be a brief summary highlighting what evidence the BSL holds. The REA, the EA and the Wood Recyclers Association (WRA) also confirmed that they will be responding. Panel Members confirmed they are happy to send comments and input regarding the call for evidence through to the BSL Administrator.

Panel Action 18-04	BSL Administrator to respond to the Role of biomass in achieving net zero: call for evidence consultation, including examples of relevant data held on the scheme.
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10) Waste Wood Standard Update

The Chair presented the slides BSL_Panel_10b. When the BSL Scheme and the EA refer to waste wood it means either clean untreated, treated non-hazardous and treated hazardous. Suggestions for the BSL Scheme would be clean untreated and treated non-hazardous, not to be listed on the BSL but only clean untreated to be listed under the BSL that must meet ISO 17225 standards. The BSL Administrator noted that the BSL Scheme does not currently have authority to remove fuels due to fuel quality, but instead the fuel is referred to Ofgem.

The Chair asked the Panel whether these ideas were appropriate for the BSL Scheme. IT agreed it was. MS pointed out that BSL Scheme will need to outline why we are doing this, for future RHI implications, and that the EA need to agree on the Part B amendments. RC agreed with this.

BEIS queried whether this can be done under current regulations as changes to legislation take a long time. AM commented that Ofgem are currently looking into this.

11) AOB

The Chair invited any other business. Expressions of gratitude from Chair and Panel Members were given to Gemserv as the current BSL Administrator.

There were no further items and the Chair thanked Panel Members and closed the meeting.

Appendix A

Member Name	Organisation
Emanuela Arvati (EA)	BEIS
Tunde Ojetola (TO)	BEIS
Ian Tubby (IT)	Forestry Commission England
Jason Hubert (JH)	Forestry Commission Scotland
Imogen Jamie (IJ)	Gemserv
Hannah Schmidt (HS)	Gemserv
Andrew Hopton (AH)	HETAS/Woodsure
Lucy Clark (LC)	LC Energy Ltd
Ross Lowrie (RL)	N/A (Self-Supplier)
Andrew Muir (AM)	Ofgem
Mark Sommerfeld (MS)	Renewable Energy Association (REA)
Richard Coulson (RC)	RWE
Julian Morgan-Jones (JM-J) (Chair)	South East Wood Fuels (SEWF)
Julia Turner (JT)	Wood Recyclers Association (WRA)
Helen Bentley-Fox (HB-F)	Woodsure
Apologies Received	
Duncan Mackinnon (DM)	Tilhill Forestry
Jason Hubert (JH)	Scottish Forestry
Gill Alker (GA)	AMP Clean Energy