

News story: Hilary Florek appointed Chair of the Marine Management Organisation

The Environment Secretary Michael Gove has appointed Hilary Florek as the Chair of the Marine Management Organisation (MMO).

Hilary joins the MMO with a wealth of knowledge from previous board-level appointments, recently serving as Chairman of the Port of Tyne Board of Directors from 2014-2017. She is a strategic communications and marketing specialist with extensive experience in both the public and private sectors.

Hilary will join the MMO as a member of the Board from 1 January 2018 and formally take over her duties as Chair on completion of the Board meeting on 8 February 2018. Her appointment is for three years. She will be paid £40,459 per annum based on eight days work a month.

The MMO is an executive non-departmental public body established in April 2010 and given powers under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. Its mission is to enable the sustainable development of our seas. It carries out a wide range of activities such as marine planning, marine licensing and work related to nature conservation and fisheries management.

Hilary Florek, Chair of the Marine Management Organisation, said:

I am delighted to be taking up this appointment as Chair of the MMO and looking forward to working with the team at an exciting and challenging time for the organisation.

Hilary succeeds the Outgoing Chair, Sir Bill Callaghan, who [was appointed on 1 May 2011](#).

Sir Bill Callaghan said:

I am delighted that Hilary has been appointed as my successor. Her wide range of experience and skills will be a valuable asset to the MMO.

The recruitment was carried out in accordance with the 'Ministerial Code of Practice for Appointments to Public Bodies'. All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, there is a requirement for the political activities of appointees to be made public. Hilary Florek has not declared any significant activity.

Biographical details:

Hilary Florek is a strategic communications and marketing specialist with extensive experience in both the public and private sectors. Having initially joined the Port of Tyne Board of Directors in 2008, she was Deputy Chairman for over three years before taking on the position of Chairman from 2014-2017.

Previously PR and Communications Director for the Vaux Group PLC, she established her own marketing consultancy, HFPR Ltd, in 2000. She currently serves on the Board of social housing association, Karbon Homes, the Board of North East Access to Finance and she is also a Trustee of the North Music Trust at the Sage, Gateshead. She is also a Director of the BE-UK Employee Ownership Trust Co Limited.

Hilary has served as non-executive director on the boards of the Community Foundation for Tyne & Wear and Northumberland and the County Durham Foundation. She is a former Trustee of the Sunderland Youth Enterprise Trust and was a Board Member of Project North East.

[Press release: Campaign to protect young people from STIs by using condoms](#)

Public Health England had launched 'Protect against STIs', a new campaign that aims to reduce the rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among 16 to 24-year-olds through condom usage. The campaign is the first government sexual health campaign in 8 years.

To coincide with the launch of the campaign, a new YouGov survey of 2,007 young people reveals current attitudes towards condom use and what prevented them from using protection.

Shockingly, the findings revealed that almost half (47%) of sexually active young people said they have had sex with someone new for the first time without using a condom; whilst 1 in 10 sexually active young people said that they had never used a condom.

The new research also revealed that sexual health is a challenging topic for young adults to discuss, as 56% of men and 43% of women said that it is difficult to talk about STIs with friends. Furthermore, 58% said that if they had an STI they would find it difficult to talk to their sexual partner about it.

In 2016, there were over 141,000 chlamydia and gonorrhoea diagnoses in people

aged between 15 and 24 in England and almost 6 in 10 (59%) of all those diagnosed with an STI were among this age group.

'Protect against STIs' aims to raise awareness of the serious consequences of STIs, which can cause infertility, pelvic inflammatory disease (PID – an infection of the female upper genital tract, including the womb, fallopian tubes and ovaries), swollen or painful testicles and even meningitis. Gonorrhoea is a particular concern because it is becoming increasingly resistant to antibiotics, and may become untreatable in the future. The campaign will be highlighting the increased likelihood of contracting an STI if having sex without a condom and that many STIs are symptomless, including 7 in 10 cases of chlamydia.

Despite the rates of STIs remaining consistently high among young people, currently, twice as many young people say that the main reason for using condoms is to avoid pregnancy (58%), rather than to avoid getting an STI (29%).

The campaign aims to help normalise and encourage condom use in young people, as it was revealed that 1 in 3 (32%) young adults said that they have never seen a condom mentioned in sex scenes on TV or in films.

'Protect Against STIs' launches on 15 December 2017 with a nationwide digital advertising campaign targeting young people. The new advertising hears from real people talking about their own personal experiences of having an STI. The identities of the individuals will not be shown but will be animated by emojis. The campaign is being supported by a range of partners, including the Family Planning Association (FPA), Durex and British Association for Sexual Health and HIV (BASHH).

Gwenda Hughes, Head of STI Surveillance at Public Health England comments:

Rates of STIs among young people continue to be too high and it is concerning that many sexually active young people are not using condoms with new partners. Six in 10 chlamydia and gonorrhoea diagnoses are in those under 25 years of age, so we need to remind young people of the importance of using condoms with a new or casual partner to help prevent infection.

Dr Sara Kayat, TV doctor and campaign supporter comments:

Using a condom is the safest way to ensure that you avoid contracting STIs, such as chlamydia or gonorrhoea. Whilst many STIs are symptomless, contracting them can have serious health consequences if left untreated and even lead to infertility. As I tell patients in my clinic every week, it's just not worth putting yourself at risk by not using a condom.

Tom Haywood, Senior Brand Manager at Durex UK, said:

STI rates remain high amongst young people in England and we want young people to know that sex can be fun and safe, if you wear a condom. There is still a perception for many that condoms reduce pleasure and fun, but condoms should be a key part of positive sexual activity as they help protect against STIs. Through this campaign, Durex wants to help educate young people around condom use and help reduce levels of STIs.

Visit [the campaign website](#) for more information.

Additional quotes

Dr Elizabeth Carlin, President of the British Association for Sexual Health and HIV (BASHH) comments:

BASHH are delighted to support this important new campaign from Public Health England. It is both timely and crucial given the high rates of sexual infections in young people, many of whom do not have symptoms. Condoms remain essential in the fight against STIs, as well as HIV, and we recommend using them for sex with any new or casual partners. We urge anyone who is concerned about their sexual health, or risks they have taken, to have a check-up and be tested – it is quick and easy to do.

Jesse, aged 24 from London who contracted chlamydia and gonorrhoea in the past comments:

I've had both chlamydia and gonorrhoea in the past when I didn't use a condom and it wasn't a nice experience. They caused pain in my groin and discomfort when urinating. The worst of it though was having to tell my previous and current sexual partner that I had contracted the STIs, so they also needed to get checked and treated. I had symptoms, but I know there are so many people who don't, so now when having sex with someone new I will definitely use a condom.

1. [Campaign advertising and images](#) can be downloaded online.
2. Dr Sara Kayat is a GP at Grays Inn Road Medical Practice. Her main areas of expertise are sexual and reproductive health, as well surgical specialties like ENT and orthopaedics. Interviews available upon request.
3. Public Health England [Public Health England](#) exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health

inequalities. It does this through world-class science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and the delivery of specialist public health services. PHE is an operationally autonomous executive agency of the Department of Health. Twitter: [@PHE_uk](#), Facebook: www.facebook.com/PublicHealthEngland.

4. The Family Planning Association (FPA) is supporting the 'Protect against STIs' campaign by helping to deliver sexual health information and support to key audiences via their Sexwise website.

[Press release: UK Government Minister Lord Bourne visits Glyndŵr University's world-leading science and innovation centre](#)

Minister for the UK Government, Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth will visit a North Wales university breaking new grounds in science and innovation today (15 December). The Minister will tour Glyndŵr University's world-leading OpTIC science and innovation centre and meet the university's Vice Chancellor, Professor Maria Hinfelaar.

The OpTIC Technology Centre has been owned and run by the university since 2009, and is home to 18 businesses, employing more than 100 staff.

Businesses based in the centre include Glyndŵr Innovations, a leading provider of innovative product development engineering and technology consulting.

The centre houses research and design facilities to support the development of high-level opto-electronics technology and scientific research across North Wales.

The centre's expertise in opto-electronics led to its scientists being chosen to polish prototype mirrors for the world's largest telescope in 2015, which is due to be completed and situated in Chile in 2024.

Lord Bourne said:

Glyndŵr University's OpTIC Centre has been pivotal for creating sustainable employment and innovative companies in the region, developing the skills base of its students and taking Glyndŵr's and North Wales' technology to the world.

Its location makes it the perfect place to bridge university research and industry, which is having a real impact on the local and Welsh economy.

It is inspiring to see the OpTIC Centre developing world-leading companies and technology, and I look forward to its continued global success.

Lord Bourne will also visit St Asaph Cathedral on Friday, where he will meet the Reverend Rex Matthias as part of his visit to North Wales.

ENDS

[Press release: Boost to remote island wind projects as consultation launched](#)

[A consultation has been launched today](#) (15 December 2017), including proposals to enable remote island wind projects to apply for a Contract for Difference (CfD) in the next competitive auction for less established renewable technologies (subject to state aid approval).

Wind projects on remote islands (such as Western Isles, Orkney and Shetland) have great potential due to the strong winds on the islands and the opportunity to bring employment and benefit local supply chains. However, they also face higher costs due to their location and transmission requirements, which set them apart from onshore wind projects elsewhere in Great Britain.

The Government announced up to £557 million for future auctions in its [Clean Growth Strategy](#) and intends for these changes to be implemented, so that island wind projects can compete in the next auction, planned for spring 2019. The consultation will also seek views on how island communities can benefit from these projects.

The last auction proved the benefits of the Government's competitive approach and saw the cost of new offshore wind fall by as much as 50%.

If a sufficient number of projects are successful it should facilitate the construction of new transmission links, which could deliver a range of wider and longer term benefits and cost savings to the renewables industry and to the island economies.

UK Energy Minister Richard Harrington said:

We've placed clean growth at the heart of our new Industrial

Strategy. We are cutting emissions while keeping costs down for consumers, creating high value jobs and growing the economy.

We are delivering on our commitment to support remote island wind projects, which have the potential to benefit local communities.

UK Government Minister for Scotland Lord Duncan said:

Wind projects in the remote islands of Scotland have the potential to generate substantial amounts of electricity and cut emissions, supporting economic growth and delivering lasting benefits for communities.

Enabling these projects to compete in future auctions will reinforce the UK's position as a world leader in renewable generation, as well as providing Scottish jobs in any projects supported.

I urge local communities, developers and other stakeholders to work together to ensure that such projects deliver lasting benefits to the islands.

A [2013 report](#) for the UK and Scottish governments concluded that wind projects on the Western Isles, Orkney and Shetland could supply around 3% of the UK's total electricity demand.

More than 750MW of wind projects with planning consent on these islands could be eligible for the next auction.

The consultation also asks for views on other changes the government is considering making to the Contracts for Difference (CfD) scheme, to enable it to continue to support new generation and provide best value for bill payers in coming years.

These changes include proposals to increase the efficiency requirements for Combined Heat and Power (CHP) and Advanced Conversion Technologies (ACT) as technology improves. This ensures that only sufficiently advanced and efficient plants are awarded subsidy.

Changes are also proposed to ensure that costs of future projects can be accurately forecasted and that future schemes continue to drive carbon emission reductions.

1. The consultation opened on 15 December 2017 and runs until 9 March 2018.
2. Government aims to support the development of onshore wind projects on remote islands, where they benefit local communities. This consultation sets out a proposed definition of remote islands wind, as a new technology that can compete in future auctions for 'less established' technologies (also known as 'Pot 2'). The proposal is subject to state aid approval.

Press release: Welsh Secretary: “Cross-border working can be the catalyst to Wales’ future prosperity”

- 1st UK Government Severn Growth Summit to be held at Celtic Manor Resort in Newport on 22 January 2018
- Alun Cairns makes clarion call for Welsh businesses to capitalise on cross border opportunities at Cardiff Breakfast Club event.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns will challenge industry on both sides of the Wales-England border to “think big to shape and transform our economic future” when he addresses an audience of business leaders in Cardiff this morning (Friday 15 December).

Speaking at the Cardiff Breakfast Club event, Mr Cairns will say “economic opportunities do not stop at political or administrative boundaries” and that the “development of growth corridors will spread prosperity across Wales and enable the nation to compete on a global stage”.

The Secretary of State will announce that he will host the first cross-border, Severn Growth business summit on 22 January at the Celtic Manor Resort. He will call on local partners and businesses from across the South West of England and the South East of Wales to come together to explore how links between the two economies can be strengthened following the announcement of the abolition of the Severn Tolls.

The speech comes following the launch of the UK Government’s Industrial Strategy last month which included the goal of developing growth corridors spanning the Welsh and English border to spread prosperity and enable Wales to compete on a global stage.

Mr Cairns will say that these corridors, coupled with the City Deals for Cardiff and Swansea and Growth Deals for North and Mid Wales will be the “building blocks needed to enable businesses and people to transform their local communities, their economies and their lives”.

During his speech, the Secretary of State will also take the opportunity to highlight the Cardiff’s “remarkable economic heritage” and its status as “a powerful engine of economic growth” for the whole of the UK.

Mr Cairns will say:

Cardiff is connecting itself to the rest of the country like never before, and having a powerhouse of industry, innovation and skills right here in our Capital City, is beneficial to the whole of Wales and the rest of the UK.

To achieve all of its potential, Cardiff must be competing in the premier league of European cities. From our outstanding universities, the improvements being made to its infrastructure and its credentials as a go to destination for major events, the city has the talent, the opportunities and the determination to rival the best in Europe, if not the world.

The Severn Growth Summit will bring a panel of speakers from leading global businesses, and higher education institutions together from either side of the border to highlight the opportunities that await from closer collaboration.

Those interested in attending the Severn Growth Summit will be able to sign up through the Eventbrite website from Friday onwards. A full list of panel speakers will be announced shortly.