

AGREED MINUTES OF MEETING NO. 1

DATE: 6th June 2017.

TIME: 11 am.

LOCATION: Abbey Court Hotel, Nenagh.

PRESENT

Dr. Tom Collins (Chairperson)

Mindy O'Brien, Michael Spellman, Barry Deane, David Wright, Connie Rochford, Keith Hyland, Tim Fenn, Neil Walker, Dr. Suzanne Linnane, Patrick Rohan, Jean Rosney, Gerald Quain, Francis O'Donnell, Brendan Fitzsimons, Dr. Tim Butter, Derry Dillon, Ollan Herr, Sinead O'Brien, Charles Stanley Smith, Dr. Thomas Harrington.

IN ATTENDANCE

Carol McCarthy (LAWCO) and Sharon Kennedy (LAWCO)

APOLOGIES

Jonathan Small, Thomas Cooney, Liam Berney, Bernadette Connolly.

Item		Details	Action
1	Welcome, apologies, introductions and update.	Dr. Tom Collins welcomed all to the meeting and thanked the members for their attendance. He noted the apologies that had been received. It was noted that an updated list of membership of the Forum had been circulated and that 25 of the 26 nominations are now in place, with the outstanding nomination to represent Angling interests. Members introduced themselves and were welcomed by the Chairperson.	Noted
2	Consideration of draft Terms of Reference and Standing Orders	It was noted that draft Terms of Reference and Standing Orders had been circulated last week. The draft document was considered in detail. Suggestions for amendments were considered and it was agreed that the amendments would be incorporated into the draft document, to be circulated in advance of the August meeting and placed as an item on the Agenda for final approval. The amendments included the following references: 1. To insert a statement of common purpose for the	Draft document to be amended and circulated. Agenda item for August meeting.

		<p>Forum.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. To incorporate reference to climate change in the terms of reference. 3. To insert at section 2 i reference to national and strategic policy level. 4. To reword section 2 ii to include reference to integrated catchment management. 5. To reword section 2 iii and vii with regard to reporting and communication arrangements with the relevant departments/agencies and also the submissions of reports to same. 6. To reword section 2 iv relating to water environment. 7. To delete section 2 vi and incorporate into a reworded section 2 v. 8. To reword section 3 v replacing the word 'services' with 'environment' and including an additional sentence with regard to a common goal. 9. To include at section 4 a requirement to invite suggestions for agenda items. 10. To insert an objective in relation to the preparation of an annual report. 11. At section 8 to insert a requirement to have a summary document prepared at the end of each meeting and circulated to all the following day. This will assist members to provide feedback to their nominating organisations. <p>In summarising the objectives of the Forum, the Chairperson advised that the main activities are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Listen and identify issues; 2. Research these issues and collate evidence based information; 3. Formulate proposals in respect of same and; 4. Take the recommendations to the appropriate level for action. <p>A brief discussion took place with regard to budgetary provision and also payment of travel expenses for members of the Forum. It was agreed that further discussions would take place with the Department and the matter can be further considered at the August meeting.</p>	
4	<p>Consideration of respective roles of the NWF and PWF</p>	<p>During the considerations concerning item 2, a discussion commenced in relation to the role of the PWF in the context of the NWF and so it was agreed to take item 4 next.</p> <p>It was noted that the Ministers stated intention, on establishing the NWF, was to eventually incorporate the work of the PWF and the National Rural Water Services Committee into the NWF. While this intention is clear, the timeline for effecting this change has not yet been clarified.</p> <p>Members, who currently have dual membership of both fora,</p>	

		<p>expressed concern with regard to time commitments and overlapping of issues between both Fora. Furthermore, it was noted that at the last meeting of the PWF, a discussion took place with regard to this item. The members of that Forum had expressed concerns with regard to their role and work and had requested some clarification with regard to how and when this change will occur.</p> <p>In addition to this, it was also noted that the National Rural Water Services Committee has not met since last year and there is no meeting planned for the foreseeable future.</p> <p>Having regard to these considerations and the stated wishes of the members of the Forum, the Chairperson suggested that he revert to the PWF (at their next meeting in a weeks' time) with the following proposal.</p> <p>Having regard to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the current and future roles of the NWF and PWF; b. the dual membership of a significant number of members on both Fora; c. the overlapping of issues of concern and; d. the requirement to make best use of resources of the membership and secretariat of both Fora, <p>it is proposed that, in the short term, the PWF will cease to exist in its current format and will become a sub-committee of the NWF.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This sub-committee will comprise of the current domestic water members on the PWF and in addition, any sectoral members on the NWF, should they so express a preference to join. • The sub-committee will focus on the programmes referred to it by Irish Water and the Commission for Energy Regulation. • Reports and recommendations of the sub-committee will be referred to the NWF for agreement. • Domestic members on the sub-committee will continue to be represented on the NWF by the two current nominees. <p>Should the PWF agree to this proposal, the Chairperson will seek Ministerial agreement and will revert back to both Fora to effect the changes.</p> <p>It was also agreed to consider the future role of the National Rural Water Services Committee in the context of the NWF - item to be considered at the next meeting.</p> <p>It was agreed that a hardcopy of the draft Plan will be circulated to those who require same.</p>	
3	Consideration	The members gathered into four groups and discussed the key	Noted

<p>of key deliverables and expectations</p>	<p>issues and priorities for the Forum over the next 6 -12 months. Each group reported back and it was agreed that the issues will be collated and considered further at the August meeting. Issues identified as follows:</p> <p>NWF identity, role and position in the national structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification in relation to remit (6 months). • Use WFD as a guide (6 months). • Develop profile/identity. • Develop clear agenda. • Define our role clearly. We are policy makers – using members experience. • Aiding accountability within Regulating Authorities – joined up thinking between water regulating authorities (EPA, DoE, IFI, OPW, LAs etc). <p>Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange for branding/publicity for the NWF (6 months). • Put in place a functioning website (6 months). • Prepare a Communication Strategy. • Establish clearly defined mechanisms for communications with department (6 months). • Issue press release following meetings. • Communicate to the public who we are and what we are about. • Explore mechanisms for engaging the Media – traditional and social. • Activate public engagement. • Ensure two way communications. <p>Response to RBMP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare balance and informed Response to RBMP (6 months). • Draft RBMP – review and establish priorities and seek extension for submission. • Review of final RDMP. <p>Research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish baseline of stakeholders’ awareness including NWF members (6 months). • Focus on a single major issue e.g. source protection, invasive species and develop set of recommendations within 12 months. • Identify research areas and funding. • Establish existing research. • Seek an adequate budget for research and education (6 months). • Research – targeted to best practice (12 months). • Documentary on peak phosphate (start a national conversation) (12 months). • Pilot plan for upstream of water extraction points (12 	
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		<p>months).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College assessment of the pilot (p and n) recovery unit (Ballyer) (6 months). • Assessment of invasive species (6 months). <p>Education/awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An adequate budget for research and education (6 months). • Establish working groups (6 months). • A funded schools and education programme (12 months). • Convince the department to run and fund a high level National 'Water' Campaign (12 months). • Prepare or have an input into Education policy (adult and schools). • Secretariat to arrange for meetings with experts – NCCA <p>Working groups</p> <p>Establish working groups for the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications and engagement – education and outreach. • Priorities for the draft RBMP. • Aiding accountability – department • Research (existing and new). • Identify funding opportunities. 	
5	<p>Consideration of report from working group of PWF with regard to the draft RBMP</p>	<p>It was noted that the draft submission had been circulated to all in advance of the meeting and some feedback had already been received with regard to same.</p> <p>Following discussion, it was agreed that a number of groups would form and prepare a 5/10 presentation at the August meeting with regard to possible amendments to the draft.</p> <p>Groupings as follows: Agriculture – D Dillon, M Spellman, T Cooney and P Rohan. Community & Voluntary – B Deane, G Quain, J Rosney, T Harrington and L Tobin. Consumers/Education – K Hyland, C Rochford, S Linnane, J Small Tourism/Business – T Fenn and N Walker Fisheries/Forestry – T Butter, F O'Donnell, B Fitzsimmons and nominee from Angling. Environment – S O'Brien, B Connolly, O Herr, M O'Brien and C Stanley Smith. Sharon to check with L Berney on his grouping.</p> <p>It was noted that there are particular concerns with regard to the Border regions, having regard their exclusion from the draft plan and also potential/unknown implications in relation to Brexit.</p> <p>Following further discussion, it was proposed and agreed to</p>	Agreed

		invite a representative from the EPA to present at the August meeting in relation to their characterisation exercise and also progress in relation to implementation.	
6	AOB	None noted	
7	Arrangements for next meeting	It was agreed that future meetings of the Forum would alternate between Dublin and regional venues. Next meeting to take place on the 2 nd August, commencing at 10.30 am in Dublin. Venue to be advised. Further meetings are scheduled for the 12 th September (either Dundalk or Portlaoise) and 8 th November (Dublin venue).	Agreed
	Summary of the meeting	An outline summary of the business transacted at the meeting was agreed – to be finalised and circulated within the next day. Items to be included as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agreement with regard to the draft Terms of Reference as amended. 2. Agreement with regard to the focus of the Forum in the context of addressing/developing policies and strategies in relation to pressures on water quality and measures to address same in the context of the draft River Basin Management Plan and the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. 3. Agreement with regard to the importance of public engagement and education as key priorities – agreed to examine various proposals. 4. Agreement to identify funding mechanisms available for research/developmental projects etc. 5. Agreement with regard to proposals on the future relationship/integration with the PWF. 6. Agreement to commence with the tendering process in relation to the development of an identity/brand and development of a suitable website. 7. Identified key deliverables – agreed to categorise same and circulate in advance of the next meeting. 8. Agreed to commence consideration of the various mechanisms for communication within the Forum. 9. Draft RBMP submission – agreed draft forms basis for submission – to be further developed by groups who will make 5/10 minute submission at next meeting. 10. Agreed to request a representative from the EPA to address the Forum at its meeting in August. 11. Arrangements for next meeting – 2nd August 2017 – 10.30am – venue in Dublin (to be confirmed). 	Agreed+
		This concluded the business of the meeting	

Signed:



Dr. Tom Collins
Chairperson
2ND August 2017