

Plenary Committee Meeting No. 25

Minutes

Meeting held on the 26th May 2020 at 10.00 am. On ZOOM

Attendees: Tom Collins (Chair), Denis Drennan, Paul O'Brien, David Wright, Gerald Quain, Suzanne Linnane, Bernadette Connolly, Derry Dillon, Ollan Herr, Sinead O'Brien, Charles Stanley-Smith, Elaine McGoff, Martin McEnroe, Connie Rochford, Keith Hyland, Laurie Kearon, Barry Deane, Jean Rosney, Thomas Harrington, Liam Berney, Dominic Cronin, Tim Butter, Tim Fenn & Keith Hyland

Apologies: Neil Walker, Brendan Fitzsimons,

In attendance: Gretta McCarron, Donal Daly, Alec Rolston and Donal Purcell

Presenting: LAWPRO: Sean Keating, Carol McCarthy and Ray Spain

Item	Details	Summary	Action
1.1	Welcome	Tom Collins welcomed the members to the meeting & offered the Forums sympathies to Dominic Cronin on his recent family bereavement.	
1.2	Consideration of Draft Minutes from April 7	Draft minutes were noted & approved.	Noted
1.3	Matters Arising from the minutes	Symposium committee to meet to progress options. Annual Report submitted to Dept. waiting for approval to publish	
2.1	To receive update on the Forums expenditure and budget for 2020.	The A/SEO informed the meeting that 22% of the budget had been spent & that the research project & other actions will bring that up. He explained that there is a saving in Meeting & Members expenses & that the Executive Team would review the savings & revert to the plenary with proposals with the possibility of increased research actions. It was suggested that the forum would investigate the possibility of providing some financial support towards assisting members who don't have an organisation to support them with the additional cost associated with participating in meetings using ZOOM such as broadband costs, etc.	Noted DP to liaise with the Department
2.2	Effectiveness review	It was proposed that the effectiveness review would seek the views of the Forum members along with the views of outside Organisations regarding the effectiveness of the Forum. The Executive & the staffing	DP

		Group to identify an individual/company to facilitate the review to possibly include a survey of members & some facilitated sessions.	DP
2.3	Appointment of members to the Water Forum by the Minister.	<p>A/SEO explained that the Chair & A/SEO had met with the Department Officials to discuss the membership of the Forum & the process for appointing the members. He explained that the first step would involve an email request to each of the existing members to seek their interest in being appointed by the Minister to the Forum. Following this it was intended that the Department would formally write to each of the Members before placing the names before the new Minister once one is appointed.</p> <p>He also explained that there were a number of vacant positions including the areas of Fisheries/aquaculture; education; disability & young people</p>	
2.4	To discuss membership of the Forums two Standing Committees	<p>It was agreed that the following members would be added to the membership of the Standing Committees:</p> <p>Catchment Management Standing Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dominic Cronin • Elaine McGoff • Paul O'Brien <p>Water Services Standing Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Wright 	
3.	LAWPRO presentation	<p>The Chair welcomed Sean Keating, Ray Spain & Carol McCarthy to the Meeting</p> <p>Sean Keating & his Team outlined the progress on LAWPRO's work programme along with the lessons learned to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 141 complete out of 190 area with 60 reports and actions plans prepared. • €225,000 of a Community Water fund. Now funding 118 projects to total of €230,000 • 1300 ASSAP visits to farms. • Dept and EPA doing assessment of ASSAP to date • Blue dot programme underway • Governance structures operating: NCMC, NTIG & regional Committees meeting • Prep for 3rd cycle underway with dept, LAWPRO and EPA holding bilateral meetings with implementing bodies looking at measures for 3rd cycle plan. • EPA doing Characterisation work. • 43 PAAs have blue dot areas within them. • Feeding into the SWMI report and consultation. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Siltation, and drainage a much larger issue than previously thought • Invasive Alien species, area with lacking in policy direction but communities are eager to get involved with. • Regional governance structures for ICM is making a difference. • ASSAP relationship is working, 30 advisors with new relationship to be managed. <p>3rd cycle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of the protect function, need to work with LAs on this. • 553 at risk water bodies in 190 PAAs. 851 to be addressed in 3rd cycle. • Level of ambition, 6 years in next cycle so likely to be able to achieve improvements in 851 water bodies. • Number of water bodies are under review, putting in monitoring programmes in these. • LAWPRO review conducted. • Need to develop social science framework to work with communities. • New community groups est'd but question of capacity to support them into the future. Importance of sustainability & governance support for these groups. • Rivers trusts, valuable model organisations, but one size does not fit all. Programme to interact and engage with stakeholders to identify what supports and structures need to be put in place. Working with Dept and LEADER on this. • UN SDGs communicating from community and dept. thinking of bringing these into our communities, communities think about jobs, heritage, the SDGs could bring all of this together. • Integrate climate and biodiversity into water quality theme. How do we integrate water to climate and biodiversity? Reflects what communities are saying. • Work around public participation and what this means to each sector. The AFU paper in this area is important. • Importance of awareness & the idea of a national campaign on water quality perhaps by working with AFU <p>Discussion with the Forum</p> <p>The Chair explained that the Governance of the RBMP is an issue for the forum & that in his view the structures have been slow in getting up and running. The level of Communication hasn't been adequate between the national bodies and the Forum.</p>	
--	--	--	--

		<p>Request to LAWPRO to you put more information on their website regarding action plans for rivers. Would like to see issues that LAWPRO are finding and measures that have been taken as result by other organisations such as IFI & OPW. GAP in information to the public on where LAWPRO are at in the paas, spreadsheet to be put on website to list where they are at.</p> <p>Pressures like Hydromorphology where channels have been straightened and deepened, measures will require significant investment. Talking to the dept about a river restoration framework, conditions that need to be applied</p> <p>Forum would like to see the links with climate and biodiversity and the forum will talk to dept on this.</p> <p>Members identified silt as a problem. Irish land had been drained, streams have been straightened, widened and over deepened, maintained too regularly but digging back releases more silt into the system.</p> <p>Measuring social investment, ESRI report will address some of this. This is being discussed through the governance structures.</p> <p>Publishing 2019 lawpro report, see gaps in identification of societal benefits of what we are doing. Re SDGs how do we take what we do to the next level, how to keep sustainability in water resource management.</p> <p>Members to send in Follow up questions to be sent to LAWPRO.</p> <p>IPA research on governance and wish to engage with the Forum on this. 2 years research, wider learning for policy and practice in other areas of public reform. Inform the 3rd cycle.</p>	<p>Gretta to collate & to be sent to LAWPRO</p>
4.	4.1 SWMI Consultation	<p>The Team explained the progress to date in drafting the documents & that the CMSC had a number of meetings to discuss them.</p> <p>Fundamentals concept of Integrated Land & Landscape Management Framework.</p> <p>Next steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document on specific response to SWMI consultation • Forum response to prep for 3rd cycle. <p>CMSC met with EPA, Dept, and LAWPRO where the beginning of this exploration began.</p> <p>Members asked to provide feedback directly to Alec on specifics of the SWMI paper.</p>	<p>Alec will collate feedback</p>

		<p>CMSC at its next meeting will aim to have a draft response to SWMI consultation.</p> <p>Dept propose to give an extension to the deadline for receipt of SWMI submissions.</p> <p>Members queried if the Forum has enough clarity around what the SWMI response looks like & if there is enough time. The Chair explained that the Background paper is the platform from which everything else evolves.</p> <p>Members were of the view that the Background document stands alone, and the Forum needs to consider how it optimise the value of it beyond swmi.</p> <p>Members were positive about the contents of the paper on Integrated Land Management as the concepts are really important & will set the tone for the direction of Forum into the future.</p> <p>The Chair asked if the Plenary was agreeable if the CMSC takes a view on behalf of the Forum regarding the next steps with the paper. The members supported this approach.</p>	
5.	WSSC	<p>The A/SEO informed the members that the Submissions to the CRU are now on the Forum website and have been acknowledged by the CRU</p> <p>The Chair of the WSSC gave an overview of the activity of the SC including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the WSSC work programme and strategic objectives, • Water conservation is key area, Alec drafted background paper and identified areas for collaboration and areas to progress over the next few meetings. Committee to hold a workshop on this topic. • Basic research into learnings from rural water on water conservation. • IW liaison group, 2nd meeting, Niall Gleeson, Eamon Gallon & Sean Laffey attended. There were good exchanges at the meeting & IW expressed an interest in engaging with the Forum . <p>Members thanked the Chair & members of the SC on their work including the engagement with IW.</p>	
6.	Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Research Lead explained that the budget submission for 2020 includes €20,000 for short term research projects. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These projects will raise the forum profile in engaging with the research community, also inform policy based on research. • Cost savings owing to Covid might allow the funding of 1 or 2 more projects. • A number of projects submitted to CMSC and WSSC & we now have 11 proposed projects, some may need further refinement. • Aim to have projects active from Sept and completed by December so that funding is committed this year. • They mainly involve desk-based research, information gathering and synthesis. • The Research proposals were circulated & it was agreed to proceed with promoting all of the topics to gauge the interest in the research community & the evaluation committee will decide which projects will be funded. 	Alec to Progress this action
7.	AOB	<p>Members from the agriculture sector expressed concern regarding the current drought which has resulted in a significant soil water deficit & that there was no rain forecast for the next 10 days.</p> <p>Members were supportive of the Forum engaging with IW & the idea of issuing a press release encouraging people to conserve water, considering all issues, supported by IW and NFGWS</p> <p>Members were also of the view that the Forum needs to be more prescriptive on specific suggestions and policy changes particularly around grey water recycling, rainwater harvesting systems, review of the Building regulations etc.</p> <p>Members expressed concern about the change in rainfall levels from January to June where we had severe flooding early in the year & we now have a drought. IW had dismissed the idea of creating storage for water in the bog of Allen that could then be used in the eastern half of the country & during a summer drought which would take huge pressure off our water resources.</p> <p>It was explained that IW will be going to public consultation with the National Water Resources Plan which will look at conservation along with supply and demand.</p>	
8	Next meeting	14 th July next meeting.	Noted.