

Plenary Committee Meeting No. 29

Meeting held on the 23rd November 2020 at 10.00 am via ZOOM

Minutes Agreed

Attendees: Tom Collins (Chair), Sinead O'Brien, Elaine McGoff, Denis Drennan, Paul O'Brien, Derrie Dillon, Dominic Cronin, Martin McEnroe, Neil Walker, Laurie Kearon, David Wright, Gerald Quain, Izzy Petrie, Suzanne Linnane, Bernadette Connolly, Ollan Herr, , Charles Stanley-Smith, Siobhan Ward, Connie Rochford, Barry Deane, Jean Rosney, Tim Fenn & Liam Berney.

Apologies: Tim Butter, Keith Hyland & Brendan Fitzsimons,

In attendance: Gretta McCarron, Alec Rolston, Angelos Alamanos and Donal Purcell

Item	Details	Summary
1.1	Welcome	The Chair welcomed the members & staff to the meeting and in
1.2	Minutes	Minutes of the Plenary meeting held on the 20 th October were agreed
1.3	Matters arising	In general, any items are included on the agenda. Proposed Schedule of plenary meetings for 2021: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 19 January • Tuesday 23 February • Tuesday 23 March • Tuesday 27 April, • Tuesday 1 June, • Tuesday 13 July, • Tuesday 14 September • Tuesday 19 October • Tuesday 7 December
2	Corporate Issues	<p>2.1 To receive Update on the Forum's expenditure for 2020 The A/SEO updated the members regarding the Forums expenditure to the 31st October 2020.</p> <p>2.2 To note update on the Water Services Act 2017 (Membership of Water Forum) Regulations 2020 (S.I. 526 of 2020) The SEO referenced the regulations which were signed by the Minister regarding the appointment of the Forum Members. Dept going to write to individuals with formal letter of appointment and the 3 year term start from there.</p>

		<p>2.3. To note Regulations made to provide for the recognition and legitimacy of State bodies holding meetings and hearings, respectively, by remote means.</p> <p>The A/SEO referenced the note circulated with the agenda which outlined the background & reasoning for making the regulations regarding virtual meetings which originated from Organisations not being in a position to holds face to face meetings as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Members expressed their approval of the regulations & all decisions made by the Forum since its meetings moved to virtual platforms in March 2020. This was proposed by Martin McEnroe & seconded by Dominic Cronin.</p> <hr/> <p>2.4 To note public consultation on the Review of the NDP.</p> <p>The A/SEO referenced the details circulated with the agenda on the consultation on the high-level review of the NDP-<i>Review to Renew</i> to be completed by the 29th January. The Chair was of the view that it would be important that the Water Forum would express a view particularly around increasing expenditure on WWT, on reducing water leakage, providing an adequate water Supply for the greater Dublin area & providing sufficient resources to implement the 3rd Cycle of the RBMP.</p> <p>Members were supportive of this & were of the view that the NDP needed to show greater ambition as a means of kick starting the economy & that we need to see how the NDP can be enhanced and expedited,</p> <p>The Chair of the WSSC said that there was alot of discussion and debate on WWS at the last meeting & that this is a huge opportunity for the Forum to highlight the lack of ambition in addressing fundamental issues in WS and wastewater.</p> <p>There was consensus on this & members were of the view that it is important that the voice of the Water Forum is included. It was agreed that the Research Lead & Policy Analyst would prepare a draft for discussion with the WSSC & the CMSC & for consideration then by the plenary on the 19th January.</p>
3.	Research Actions	<p>3.1 To confirm the research report by Dr Charles Larkin, titled “<i>Optimising Water Quality Returns from the Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy</i>” as a report to the Water Forum.</p> <p>The Chair outlined that the report was now complete & as previously mentioned it was a report to the Forum rather than of the Forum.</p> <p>The members accepted the report as a report to the Forum.</p> <p>3.2 To receive discussion note on the AFU-commissioned report on CAP reform and water quality’</p> <p>The Research lead summarised the <i>Discussion Note</i> he had prepared on the CAP Research Paper which will be used as the basis for a press release to support the Webinar planned for 4th December:</p> <p>The Discussion Note is based on key aspects from Charles Larkins Report. It highlights 5 key messages:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cap provides support and protection for ecosystems and food is a complex problem 2. It is hard for farmers to be green if in the red 3. Public money for public good. 4. Farmers need to be supported to protect water quality listed actions. 5. An integrated catchment-based approach is necessary <p>The concepts outlined in the Forums FILLM document also come through as a way to achieve the harmony in the Forums water aspirations.</p> <p>It also outlines why the report was commissioned. The Chair asked if the Forum was happy for this content to form the base of the press release & that it be published on the website as the agreed statement from the Forum.</p> <p>Overall members were happy with the Discussion Note. Some Members expressed concern about individual points such as:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> point 4 regarding the need for separate funding outside of CAP for areas such as wetlands and buffer zones. Committee asked to review this point. It was agreed to revise point 4 to include the phrase farmers should be supported through CAP and other programmes. The full point will now read as <i>Farmers need to be supported through CAP and other means to protect, restore and improve water quality through, for example, maintaining and re-establishing wetlands and native woodlands, installing buffer strips where appropriate and protecting water courses to improve water quality and provide co-benefits for climate and biodiversity.</i> Under eco schemes and landscape features, these can include woodlands, buffer strips. Possibility for these to come under pillar 1. The need to improve the overall presentation & formatting of the main report along with an inaccuracy regarding the figures for natural capital in the text. This will be reviewed by the Research Lead and amended accordingly. <p>3.3 To receive update on research projects incl.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The research Lead updated the meeting on the current status of the Research Projects.
4.	Education Actions	<p>4.1 To receive update on the Forums Communication & Education Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Education lead updated the members on the upcoming webinar & need to register & to encourage reps from their organisations to register with Eventbrite also. Currently have 75 registered. A Poll & Questions to be used on the day. The Forum Chair will be chairing the discussion on the day.
5	WS Standing Committee	<p>5.1 To receive update from the WS Standing Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-legislative scrutiny of Abstraction bill ongoing EPA wastewater report was published and highlighted a large number of concerns re WWT which will be discussed at the upcoming Liaison Group meeting Issue of the East & Midlands water supply project has been queried with the CRU Members asked for a proper and full debate after the CRU report is published including the issue of the source & storage of the water. Members agreed to write to the Minister in regard to the various issues raised on Wastewater treatment. <p>5.2 To note the Forums submission to the CRU on the IW Performance Assessment Framework (previously circulated by email)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content of the submission was noted

		<p>5.3 To receive presentation on the Water Forums background paper- Overview of beach & bathing Water closures in 2020 (attached)</p> <p>Post-Doc Researcher presented a background paper detailing issues causing closure of beaches & bathing areas in summer of 2020. Members welcomed report. Issues identified include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water quality monitoring needs to be more frequent and throughout the year • Public waiting a long time to find out if wq has improved • Measurements do not cover the rainfall events, so it is difficult to see the impact on SWO and water quality of heavy rainfall events. <p>Non-technical summary of this report is being developed for use by the general public & a vpress release can be developed based on this.</p> <p>Members welcomed the findings in the report & were of the view that major infrastructural alignment is needed to address some of these issues & that the report captures the daily experience for a lot of people</p>
6.	CM Standing Committee	<p>6.1 To receive update from the CM Standing Committee</p> <p>The Chair informed the meeting of the interaction between the CMSC & the Dept on the 3rd RBMP. CMSC have had a number of meetings with Dept, LAWPRO and EPA. The Dept are still at an early stage of drafting the plan & are interested in what the forum wants to say in regard to the plan. It is planned to meet again with the Dept in December regarding the area of public engagement and the implication of FILLM. Important role of the Forum in trying to get concepts in FILLM included in the draft & final plan.</p>
7.	AOB	<p>Members raised the issue of the private Members Bill in the Dail on a Single Shannon agency. A/SEO informed the meeting that the Group can raise this issue when the CMSC meets with the OPW early on the 12th January.</p>
8.	To Confirm the date & time of the Next Plenary meeting	<p>19th January 2021 at 10.00am</p>