

## Plenary Committee Meeting No. 32

Meeting held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2021 via ZOOM

### Minutes Agreed

- Attendees:** Tom Collins (Chair), Denis Drennan, Paul O'Brien, Dominic Cronin, Neil Walker, David Wright, Gerald Quain, Suzanne Linnane, Bernadette Connolly, Ollan Herr, Charles Stanley-Smith, , Connie Rochford, Barry Deane, Siobhan Ward, Tim Fenn, Liam Berney, Izzy Petrie, Derrie Dillon, Keith Hyland, & Tim Butter.
- Apologies:** Brendan Fitzsimons, Laurie Kearon, Elaine McGoff, Jean Rosney, Martin McEnroe & Sinead O'Brien,
- In attendance:** Gretta McCarron, Triona McGrath, Angelos Alamanos, Donal Daly and Donal Purcell

Item	Details	Summary
1.1	<b>Welcome</b>	The Chair welcomed the members & staff to the meeting. It was agreed that Connie Rochford would chair plenary meetings if there was a communications/internet breakdown or other issue for the Chair, Tom Collins
1.2	<b>Minutes</b>	Minutes of the Plenary meeting No. 31 – 23 <sup>rd</sup> February 2021 were agreed
1.3	<b>Matters arising</b>	none
2.	<b>Corporate Issues</b>	<p><b>2.1 Development of Equality &amp; Diversity (EDI) Statement for the Forum</b> The Draft Equality &amp; Diversity Policy was adopted proposed by Keith Hyland &amp; seconded by Liam Berney</p> <p><b>2.2 To receive update on the Forum's expenditure for 2021</b> The A/SEO updated the members regarding the Forums expenditure to the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2021 with a total expenditure €47,735.93. The A/SEO explained that there was no expenditure on meeting costs or members expenses as there were no face to face meetings &amp; that there will need to be a review done mid-year.</p> <p><b>2.3 To receive update on procurement of a Consultant to facilitate the Strategic Plan</b> The A/SEO explained that the tender had been circulated for procuring a Consultant Facilitator &amp; the closing date was on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March. It was agreed that the Staffing Sub-Committee would evaluate the Tenders based on the agreed criteria (<i>with at least 3 members to attend</i>) and choose the Consultant for the work. David Wright excused himself from the selection process as he had given in the name of one of the consultants when the Forum was in the process of identifying suitable candidates to be asked to tender for the work.</p> <p><b>2.4 To consider &amp; approve the Waterforums draft Annual report for 2020:</b> The draft Annual Report for 2020 was presented &amp; approved by the members. It was proposed of Charles Stanley-Smith &amp; seconded by Suzanne Linnane. The A/SEO acknowledged the work of Gretta McCarron in drafting the report &amp; explained that the document will now be formatted and submitted to Department in advance of the deadline of the 30<sup>th</sup> April.</p>

		<p><b>2.5 To note any correspondence.</b> The A/SEO highlighted the correspondence received &amp; circulated in advance of the meeting from Kennedy Analysis &amp; from Fight the Pipe in regard to their submissions to Irish Water on the NWRP, the contents of which were noted.</p>
3.	Research Actions	<p><b>Peatlands Report:</b> The Chair thanked the members for agreeing to put the report on the Forums website &amp; recommended that the Forum should now formally publish &amp; publicise the documents as a report to the Forum. This was agreed by the meeting. Members were of the view that it was a very useful contribution to our knowledge on Water &amp; Peatlands. It was also agreed to proceed with the Webinar on the topic of the Research re. Peatlands on the 21st May</p> <p><b>Research project updates</b></p> <p><b>ESRs</b> The Research Lead explained that 2 of the Early Career Bursaries were complete &amp; one would be presented to the WSSC shortly on Protecting Private Supplies &amp; the one on Sediment contamination legacy issues would be presented to the next CMSC meeting She explained that she was currently reviewing the report on Communicating Water availability and that there was a delay on the research project on water governance due to a family issue for the Researcher.</p> <p><b>Invasive species research</b> The research lead explained that the draft report is due by the end of March &amp; it will be reviewed &amp; should be ready for presentation in May.</p> <p><b>2021 Research proposals</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Framework for Improving Domestic water conservation in Ireland:</b> The Research Lead explained that this project had been discussed at the WSSC &amp; that it included alternative technologies, incentives for water conservation, promotion measures, efficiency labelling, and promotion around this &amp; that it could also examine questions for a survey on water conservation. It was agreed that it was timely to progress at this stage as the country had water supply issues in 2018 and 2020, Members also asked if the study could examine the possibility of including water harvesting in the building regulations along with small systems for toilets.</li> <li><b>2. 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the CAP research:</b> The Research Lead explained that this project would examine the delivery implications of policy recommendations of the Larkin report incl. Public money for public goods, performance based approaches, learnings from current EIPs, land characterisations for right measure in right place, governance and admin issues, deal with areas not receiving payments &amp; the change from one -size-fits-all approach. Are additional payments needed, is landscape scale actions feasible, culture beliefs and attitudes to behavioural change. Members were of the view that this would be a useful study &amp; could feed into future consultation on the CAP &amp; into the dRBMP. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collective action between farmers and communities on landscape scale is very important.</li> <li>• Specific areas need funding, CAP is not the only the answer. Would like community-based socio-economic review as well.</li> <li>• CAP consultation on draft plan in Sept/Oct and this research should feed into this.</li> </ul> The Chair was of the view that it is important to frame the research as it could be a major piece of work &amp; that funding may not be adequate. Need to review the budget. Tender assessment to be carried out by a group from the CMSC. It was proposed to have 2 projects: 1 looking at the above area around developing the EIPs and results based payments and a 2nd to look at addressing the socio economic aspects of Agri environmental schemes.</li> </ol> <p><b>Marine Protected area expansion</b> The research Lead explained re the Dept consultation on the MPA's. Consultation is looking for views, focus is offshore. AFU Members were supportive of preparing a submission on this. Research Lead to convene a group on this to meet with the Dept for a</p>

		briefing & to look at preparing a submission.
4.	<b>Education Actions</b>	<p><b>4.1 To receive update on the Forums Communication &amp; Education Actions</b></p> <p>The Education &amp; Comms Lead updated the meeting in regard to progress on the education actions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal to work with the producers of the Environmental TV programme Eco Eye which is shown on RTE 1 &amp; has a viewership reach of approx. 500,000 people per episode. The programme to focus on Water Conservation. Members were agreeable to this subject to the approval by the Department to utilise funding towards the cost.</li> <li>• World water day, Launch of Water education providers, pullout for schools from catchments.ie and available on our website.</li> <li>• Launch of water matters video and competition results will be announced on 23rd April, Earth Day.</li> <li>• FILLM abstract submitted to Irish Association of Hydrologists Conference, 26th April presentation has been accepted and the Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management Irish Conference 27th April presentation accepted.</li> <li>• Contact from Wexford Rural water committee, to give presentation on role of AFU.</li> <li>• NFGWS make suggestion to the active Rural Water committees to invite Forum to make presentations on our work (online).</li> </ul>
5	<b>WS Standing Committee</b>	<p>The A/SEO referenced the update report already circulated from the recent meeting of the AFU Liaison Group with IW along with the update from the CRU.</p> <p><b>Response to NWRP submission.</b></p> <p>The Forum held a meeting with IW to go through the Forums Submission on the NWRP. Summary report circulated. IW is preparing its consultation report paper on the submissions. This was a positive engagement &amp; feedback on the Forums submission.</p> <p><b>EMWSP</b></p> <p>Planning for the WSP is ongoing but cannot be finalised until completion of the framework for the NWRP which will include a Regional plan for East &amp; Midlands which will have consultation period of 12 weeks over the summer.</p> <p>Members expressed concern regarding the delay in progressing the WSP. Members would like to see more publicity to develop awareness on the issues in the future &amp; to also consider writing to the Minister.</p> <p><b>Industrial use and reuse of water</b></p> <p>Request for Angelo to gather information on the industrial use and reuse of water for the next meeting. Building water conservation around commercial usage of water is also important. Consider the sustainable or ethical use of drinking water.</p> <p><b>Water abstraction issue.</b></p> <p>Changes are recommended by the Oireachtas. Some members of the view that dropping threshold for licencing will have unintended consequences and EPA will need a lot more staff to deal with this. WSSC had noted members concerns but recommended that the Forum waits until we have more information from the Dept before we respond.</p>
6.	<b>CM Standing Committee</b>	The A/SEO informed the meeting that The Forum is waiting to set up a meeting for the CMSC with the Dept re progress on the draft RBMP. It is understood that it is likely that the draft RBMP will now be published towards the end of May.
7.	<b>AOB</b>	<p>Bernie Connolly informed the meeting that the NPWS is currently being reviewed. Members queried if AFU could make a contribution to this as there is a close link between Habitats and WFD &amp; that the Forums FILLM would be relevant to the area.</p> <p>It was agreed to share the link for the consultation/stakeholder survey with the members. It was also agreed that the Forum would submit the FILLM to the submission section of the consultation.</p>
8.	<b>Date &amp; time of the Next Plenary meeting</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> April at 10.00am VIA ZOOM