

Plenary Committee Meeting No. 35

Meeting held on the 13th July 2021 via ZOOM

Minutes DRAFT

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

Apologies: Laurie Kearon & Elaine McGoff

In attendance: Donal Purcell, Gretta McCarron, Triona McGrath, Angelos Alamanos and Donal Daly

Item	Details	Summary
1.1	Welcome	The Chair welcomed the members & staff to the meeting.
1.2	Minutes	Minutes of meeting of 1 st June were agreed.
1.3	Matters arising	none
2.	Corporate Issues	<p>2.1 To receive update on the Forum's expenditure for 2021 Detail of Expenditure to 30th may had been circulated in advance of the meeting showing a total expenditure of €222,502.52. The SEO explained that there were underspends in meeting/travel expenses due to Covid 19 & there are proposals to utilise some of the funding for the Eco Eye Programme which is on the agenda today.</p> <p>2.2 To receive update on the development of the Forums next Strategic Plan The A/SEO updated the members on the development of the new Strategic Plan. He explained that the Forum was at stage 5 in the process with the Stakeholder consultation now complete. Having completed this stage of the work the Consultants, Steering Group & Staffing Team will now be focusing on the future (vision, mission, goals & actions) for the new strategic Plan & will forward information on this towards the end of August/early September when it is also planned to have a workshop with the plenary members. The presentation from today & report on the stakeholder consultation from the consultants will be circulated to the members. Some members expressed concern with the lack of progress in improving Irelands water quality. The Chair acknowledged members concerns & explained that the work of the Forum centre on drawing on science and evidence to contribute & inform policy & that the Forum is not a campaign group, but a stakeholder Forum, with a negotiation agenda, which is different and more complex than a campaign group.</p>
3.	Education and Comms	<p>3.1 To receive update on the Communication & Education Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FILLM document dissemination to- CARO, DAFM, EPA, Teagasc, Biodiversity Ireland, LAWPRO, Regional Committees, GSI, ABP, CCMA, DECC, IW. Also available in hard copies.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media engagements, submission to Department from Education working group – national strategy education and communication on sustainable development. • Summer Newsletter. Ready to circulate. • ECO Eye Programme. The Education lead explained that the proposed programme is to address water conservation in Ireland. The programme makers had provided a programme overview to include the value of water resources, the pressures, unique challenges for the Dublin region, infrastructure, cost of delivering water to households. Water conservation, reduce the cost of services, reduces impact on infrastructure, communities and business conservation, future proof water supply. Outputs from ongoing research. The total cost of the production would be €40,000. With the possibility of some contribution from LAWPRO & NFGWS • Members were of the view that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ this was a great opportunity to promote Water Conservation & to improve the profile of the Forum. The Forum needs to lead the project and to have an input to the content. ○ Important to ensure that the tone is correct & that the Forum should do it independently of other state Bodies. ○ NFGWS would like to bring practical, experience to the programme of water conservation. ○ Try to include the EPA code of practice and its limitations. ○ Some focus on legislation, encourage people to support necessary changes to legislation. • The Chair of the Education WG explained that the group wanted to do this as there are gaps in what IW & government have done in not having the discussion with the public around water issues. This is a good opportunity to lead the debate and educate the public. This was supported by the Chair of the WS Standing Committee • The A/SEO explained that the Forum could support/ grant aid the production of the programme from funding that would not be utilised this year from Meeting costs & Members expenses. The members approved the support to the programme of €40,000 subject to Department approval.
4.	Research and Policy Update	<p>The Research lead updated the meeting on the Research & policy analysis actions incl:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Overview of the MPA Public Consultation. • Key Research Projects; discussed the objectives of the Forum research (science to policy, rather than new scientific research). • 2021 ESR Bursary Tender briefs. Review 4 topics for round 1 of bursary tenders (likely to have second round later in the summer) • 2021 Research – update on domestic water conservation and developing policy coherence research piece. • 2020 ESR Research – communicating water availability, update on Hammond Bursary presentation – will discuss some recommendations with IW at next meeting. Outputs from this research should also contribute to Strategic Plan. • EPA Research Dissemination: Suggested a new collaboration with the EPA and 3rd level institutes to have them present relevant research to the Forum to discuss policy recommendations. • DHLGH and ESRI Water Research Programme; update on this research, will circulate any studies arising from ESRI. • Stakeholder engagement: proposed training with Dialogue Matters (AFU, EPA, LAWPRO & DHLGH) as a means of engagement going into the next cycle. • Members asked that an item on training for public participation as part of the next RBMP be put on the agenda for the next plenary meeting so the members can discuss it & then take a position on it with the DHLGH.

5	WS Standing Committee	<p>5.1 To receive update on WSSC meeting.</p> <p>The Chair updated the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referenced the implications from results from National Inspection Plan for domestic WWT & that the Forum should take stronger role on this & that it should be further discussed by the catchment management Committee. • Regarding the work done on the early career bursary by Hammond Sarpong as being a valuable contribution to the Forums thinking & that it can be fed into the new strategic plan. • The briefing on the rural water review by the DHLGH (2 parts to the review). Expected that the Forum would be involved in the next phase of the review.
6.	CM Standing Committee	<p>The Chair acknowledge the work of the CMSC & Research Lead in drafting the submission on the Forums Agri-Food Strategy 2030.</p> <p>The A/SEO informed the meeting that the draft 3rd RBMP – will not published until the end of July at the earliest.</p>
7.	Consultation with Members on the position of Chair of the Water Forum	<p>The Chair, Tom Collins welcomed Emer Connolly, PO Catherine McCarthy AP & Veronica O’Brien EO from DHLGH & Karen Brosnan (Independent facilitator) who would chair/ facilitate this session as he would step out of the meeting for the consultation with Members on the role of Chair of the Water Forum:</p> <p>Emer Connolly, from Water Policy Section of DHLGH acknowledged the great contribution of Dr Tom Collins as the first Chair of the Forum. The Forum Members also acknowledged the work of the current chair & referenced his great commitment, fairness & leadership over the past 4 years. Emer explained about the Profile and role of the new Chair & that it was a Ministerial position. She explained that the filling of the position would be overseen by Stateboards.ie through the Public Appointments Service where an independent selection committee would assess the applications & provide a shortlist to go to the minister for his approval. She thanked Karen Brosnan for agreeing to facilitate the session.</p> <p>Key points on the role & qualities for candidates for Chair from the consultation with the Forum members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the role of a stakeholder forum, and its potential impact with stakeholders and with policy • Strong facilitation skills. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Someone who can synthesise and can enable respectful dialogue. ○ The ability to balance opinion-based & knowledge (science)-based aspects. ○ Ability to manage conflicts of interests • Neutral, Independent & Objective • Empathy & Moral authority • Principals of Social justice and equality • An understanding of the commitment required. <p>Members requested that a representative of the Forum would be involved in the selection process.</p> <p>Emer Connolly thanked the members for their work on the Forum & for participating in the discussion.</p>
8.	AOB	-
9.	Date & time of Next Plenary meeting	<p>The next meeting is on Tuesday 14th September at 10.00am VIA ZOOM. It is hoped to have the Department present to brief the members on the draft 3rd cycle RBMP plan for this meeting.</p>