

## Plenary Meeting

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2022

ZOOM

Agreed MINUTES

**Attendees:** Matt Crowe (Chair), Denis Drennan, Paul O’Brien, Dominic Cronin, Martin McEnroe, Suzanne Linnane, Ollan Herr, Charles Stanley Smith, Brendan Fitzsimons, Derrie Dillon, Connie Rochford, Keith Hyland, Sinead O’Brien, Tim Fenn & Tim Butter,

**Apologies:** Barry Deane, Liam Berney, Siobhan Ward, Jean Rosney, Neil Walker, David Wright, Gerald Quain, Elaine McGoff, Bernadette Connolly & Issy Petrie,

**In Attendance:** Donal Purcell, Triona McGrath, Gretta McCarron, Donal Daly

No.	Details	Summary	Action
1.1	<b>Welcome &amp; Apologies</b>	The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and apologies were noted.	
1.1	<b>Consideration of minutes of last meeting</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> April Plenary (Workshop) minutes were approved	
2..1	<b>Corporate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair and SEO met with Minister O’Brien along with his officials (Fergal O’Coighligh Ass Sec, David Flynn Principal Advisor &amp; Paul O’Brien AP Water Policy) to update them on progress and to discuss future engagement with the Forum.</li> <li>The Chair &amp; staff also met with officials from the Water Advisory Unit to discuss the draft RBMP. Proposed future meeting with Forum members and WAU officials on draft plan with CMSC on 29<sup>th</sup> June.</li> <li>Chair and SEO met Paul McGowan, CRU and Chair of WAB, and have agreed that the Forum would meet with the WAB as requested. Meeting to be part of the agenda for the September Plenary meeting &amp; to discuss results of IW customer survey and the IW regulatory framework.</li> </ul>	Arrange meetings
2.2	<b>Staffing</b>	Research & Policy Executive position advertised with a closing date of 16 <sup>th</sup> June. Members asked to circulate information to their networks. Chair & SEO to arrange for shortlisting & interview panels to be appointed in cooperation with Tipperary County Council HR section & the staffing sub Group.	Arrange meeting of Staffing sub Group
2.3	<b>Membership</b>	Vacancies in Forum membership: It was agreed that the SEO would meet with the staffing sub Group to review the vacancies & to report back to the plenary	

No.	Details	Summary	Action
2.4	<b>Budget</b>	<p>The expenditure to the 30<sup>th</sup> April was circulated to members. The DHLGH have requested a July to end of year forecast with projected over/underspend. The Forum will be requested to outline its budget for 2023 by the end of July/August.</p>	
2.5	<b>Meetings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14 June WSSC meeting with IW re WRP for south west;</li> <li>• Water Conservation workshop on 22<sup>nd</sup> June at the Liffey Valley Clayton;</li> <li>• CMSC 29<sup>th</sup> June in the Spenser hotel;</li> <li>• Plenary July 12<sup>th</sup> Athlone (to include Farewell lunch for Tom Collins &amp; possible cruise on the Shannon);</li> <li>• Plenary 13 Sept, to include engagement with WAB</li> </ul>	
3.0	<b>Research Policy Coherence Nelly Montblanc</b>	<p>The Chair welcomed <b>Nelly Montblanc</b> to the meeting who gave an overview of her research on Policy coherence in the water sector. Presentation attached.</p> <p><b>Discussion</b></p> <p>Members commented on the very interesting policy brief.</p> <p><b>Q. Are there tools to understand the linkages, are there systematic ways to identify trade-offs between policies?</b></p> <p>A. Wide range of tools in literature, using maths which is useful but needs resources and commitments, the outputs may not make sense to the average person. Foresight scenarios are a useful way of explaining what the future will look like in different situations. Useful tool and some reports on this, showing what will be alive in 30 years, what it will be like for people. Shows a potential future reality. Good tool for talking to society.</p> <p><b>Q. Science and social science policy interface is that where this happens? Are the Forum the science policy interface?</b></p> <p>A. The Forum is the science-policy interface, but can be the policy, society interface also, coherence is not just a policy issue also a behavioural issue. Talking to individuals is also important, foresight thinking is useful for that.</p> <p><b>Q. Looking at the wicked problems it seems hopeless. How do we get away with the GDP measurement trap?</b></p> <p>A. Important not to think of predictions or projections but possibilities. Examples of what the world could look like, describe 3 or 4 depending on choices, think about the path and realise that things can be different. GDP indicator, some work done commissioned to look at other indicators, human development indicators, possible to look into well-being etc. changing the narrative, happy and healthy without GDP. Building a new future is a difficult endeavour, work in the background to make something new emerge.</p> <p><b>Next steps:</b></p> <p>Q. Living with less – equality of sacrifice is important here. How to achieve this?</p> <p>Q. Challenges we are facing, reduce fossil fuels in 30 years time. IW difficulty recovering N from wastewater, it currently depends on fossil fuels. Paradigm shift is needed.</p>	

No.	Details	Summary	Action
		<p>Q. New narrative, behaviour change, need more systemic change broad recommendation for policy transparency on how trade-offs are managed, any examples of how this would work? Comment. Policy recommendations, some already in line with recommendations made in the RBMP, need take our recommendations further, periodic reviews of policy are important, the Forum could take this further, either the EPA or other organisations could do the review of key policies which aim to protect water or the environment. The Forum could take a stronger position on this. Also, the Forum could be strong on Documenting how trade-offs are managed. All new policy should have a section on trade-offs Another recommendation in Nelly’s research; Project management secretariat, this is in line with the Forum’s recommendation in its submission on the dRBMP. The Forum could further push this message forward to manage the policy coherence.</p> <p>Q. Nelly, you mentioned Ministries in ecological planning have a higher power in France, is that correct, any other examples of this?</p> <p>Q. What can the Forum do the progress with this research. A. What can be done work on the 2 areas (policy and behaviour) simultaneously, policy documenting trade-offs. Stakeholder dialogue, conflicts addressed would be a huge step forward. Behavioural change is part of the equation, this is where direct stakeholder relationship, develop narrative, other thinking, imagining different futures. Change paths is difficult, work on this narrative less technical to make individual change etc, as this encourages pressure on politics.</p> <p>Chair; the Forum is part of this change, we need a good think about how to make maximum use of this research. Start of a discussion and we need to be able to work out practical things to move along. Next steps: agreed on website, further discussions with EPA, Dept etc. workshop later in the year, e.g. could include Hans from the EEA etc. Recommend Imagining different futures, youth conference would be good for this. And this could be the theme.</p> <p>Chair; report to the Forum, develop policy position based on this, workshop in Sept. draft position paper as starting point for discussion next week.</p>	<p>GMC – share reports and website.</p> <p>Consider comms on research.</p> <p>TMG will start a summary document to create a position paper on policy coherence. Will liaise with Exec and Chair.</p>
4.0	<b>Role and Focus &amp; feedback on the dRBMP submission</b>	<p>The Chair explained that he &amp; the SEO had met with Minister O’Brien &amp; that he had explained that the Forum were doing some work on the role &amp; Focus.</p> <p>Some members asked if the CMSC should prepare a strategic approach with the Dept. for the workshop at the end of June. The Chair explained that he would prefer to allow Water Advisory Section the opportunity to progress their work in the meantime and then we can robustly engage with them on the 29<sup>th</sup> June.</p> <p>The Chair explained that the Forum will work to shape the structure of the workshop on the 29<sup>th</sup> June,</p>	<p>Executive &amp; Chair to engage with the DHLGH to agree the</p>

No.	Details	Summary	Action
		<p><b>Discussion on role and focus, presented by the Chair</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic goals and Statutory Advisory roles</li> <li>• Need to focus efforts, build on forum strengths</li> <li>• Early engagement in policy development</li> <li>• Key areas of work for the next 3 years?</li> <li>• Key messages and focus for the Chair and members in outside engagements</li> </ul> <p>Report on workshop outputs, 13 members attended so other members may need an opportunity to contribute. The workshop identified proposed areas of focus with each group.</p> <p>Comment: Public participation is not included in slides. While it is included in the RBMP, it is also important in other aspects of the Forum’s role.  Comment: WPAC advises the Minister, difficult to separate WPAC and the Minister.  Chair: members can submit input to role and focus report in any way they think.  Chair: Forum could consider meeting WPAC before final RBMP?</p> <p>The Chair was of the view that he would like to have a final discussion with the members on these with sign off at plenary.</p> <p>It was suggested to review the themes from the previous strategy &amp; to agree themes that the Forum would focus on for the next few years</p> <p>All members to submit feedback to role and focus report by the end of next week (June 10<sup>th</sup>).</p>	workshop content.
5.0	<b>Research Update</b>	<p>The Research Lead provide the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 research tenders out, Review panel required for research tenders review; Suzanne Linnane, Charles S Smith and Sinead O Brien volunteered to review the Research Tenders.</li> <li>• €20k left in budget, proposing a research project to look at non domestic water use, to support national water conservation strategy</li> <li>• Need data from IW, private abstraction, compare with international practice, to support non-domestic water conservation</li> <li>• Next years budget €70K propose; 2 research projects</li> <li>• Examine idea of doing some joint bids with other organisations</li> <li>• Further discussion on this in July or input on additional research projects</li> <li>• Internal research: RBMP recommendations; regulation implementation, develop position paper on this – water production relative to food production – nutrient recovery position paper – vtec in drinking water – env enforcement model comparisons with EU</li> </ul> <p>Question if the Forum needs to make a decision on 2022 budget/additional research today?</p> <p>A. Yes; ideally any additional research for 2022 needs to be decided asap. Non-domestic water usage; agreed as a topic for €20k for this year. The SEO suggested that members could make proposals to Executive for any additional research ideas for 2023 after this meeting.</p>	TMG to follow up with members in relation to a time for zoom to review tenders.

No.	Details	Summary	Action
		<p>Comment; Research should be decided as part of the strategic thinking each year.</p> <p>Member suggested that she would like to see the Forum concentrating on water quality than quantity for research. The SEO explained that it is important to agree and finalise programmes for 2022 as the DHLGH are closing off budgets at the end of November.</p> <p>A member had question on the Nutrient recovery research completed by AFU as there is a community group trialling domestic nutrient recovery &amp; he would like to see a research project to map the impact of this pilot project following on from the previous research.</p> <p>Research Lead explained that the Research for the forum was completed but that she would forward the name should the group want to explore the idea of retaining a researcher themselves</p>	<p>Research Lead to send on the details of the Researcher to the Member</p>
6.0	<b>Comms Update</b>	<p>The Comms Lead explained:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the role and focus work along with and the strategic research discussions would inform comms for 2023.</li> <li>• The tender for the transition year project is complete</li> <li>• Work on developing a podcast is ongoing</li> <li>• In discussion with BT Young Scientist Awards re the Forum supporting an award for water as part of the BT Young Scientist for 2023</li> </ul>	
7.0	<b>AOB</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chair offered Condolences on behalf of the members to Donal Daly on the recent death of his mother</li> <li>• Keith Hyland was nominated &amp; accepted the role as chair for the Water Services Standing Committee</li> <li>• Public participation working group to examine what meaningful public participation is and how the Forum can progress its recommendations in this area. Members to send email to SEO if interested in participating on the public participation group.</li> </ul>	
8.0	<b>Next meeting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12<sup>th</sup> July in the Hodson Bay Hotel to include Lunch with Tom Collins &amp; boat Trip on Lough Ree</li> </ul>	<p>Arrange meetings &amp; notify members</p>