

**32nd MEETING OF THE FOYLE CARLINGFORD AND IRISH LIGHTS  
COMMISSION**

**Held on  
Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2005  
At  
Four Seasons Hotel Carlingford**

**Present**

**Board**

Peter Savage (Chairperson)  
Lord Cooke of Islandreagh (Vice Chair)  
Jacqui McConville  
Andrew Ward  
Jack Allen  
Joseph Martin  
Frank Feely  
Tarlach O'Crosain  
Siobhan Logue  
Dick Blakiston-Houston  
Pat Griffin

**Loughs Agency**

Derick Anderson CEO  
John Pollock  
Stanley Thorpe  
Ann McPherson

**1. Presentation by Dundalk Chamber of Commerce**

Mr Tosh gave an overview of the tourism potential for Carlingford Lough and his proposal for a maritime leisure conference. This conference would tie in with the Celtic Maritime Festival and the already secured Tall Ships, which will call, into Carlingford Lough on 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> May 2006. The Board agreed that the Loughs Agency should participate in this event and asked the CEO to write to Mr Tosh confirming their support and to ask that a representative from the Agency be part of the working group. They were unable to provide financial support for the project at this stage until more detail of costs etc are known and asked that these be brought to a future Board meeting.

**2. Apologies**

No apologies

**3. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes were agreed

Proposed Andrew Ward  
Seconded Frank Feely

#### **4. Reserved Minutes**

None

#### **5. Matters Arising**

None

#### **6. CE Report**

##### **6.1 Counters**

CEO gave an update on the counter figures for 2005 figures as follows:

Sion Mills 9251 (vandalised), Finn 8561, Roe 2867, Faughan 3500, Corrick 1907 (vandalised)

##### **6.2 PFA**

This project is now underway with the recruitment of a French PhD student Guillaume Dauphin.

##### **6.3 Genetics**

The second stage of this programme will commence shortly with the recent recruitment of a research assistant to work in the genetics laboratory in QUB.

##### **6.4 Cohesion Fund**

All instream work is complete on the Clanrye River and tender documents are being prepared for the fish counter and it is anticipated this will be operational next season.

The tender exercise to recruit consultant engineers for the River Deelee fish pass is complete and Ferguson McIlveen have been appointed.

It is hoped to tender shortly for design engineers for the River Derg fish counter and trapping station.

The Board will be kept informed on the progress of all of these projects.

## **6.5 Tuna**

The Board were provided with some photographs and a video clip of Blue Fin Tuna recently sighted in the Foyle Area just off the North Coast. This has great tourism potential and a full report of sightings will be provided when the ongoing survey is complete. Any Board member wishing to participate in the survey contact Stanley Thorpe or Roly Wysner

## **6.6 Protection**

Stanley Thorpe gave an overview of the seizures for 2005 and compared the figures to recent years. The amount of illegal fishing is significantly down and with protection effort remaining the same this is attributed to the carcass tagging system and the reduction of outlets for illegally caught fish.

## **6.7 Riverwatch**

The Board were provided with a report on Riverwatch and the various activities since their last meeting. They requested that for the next meeting a breakdown of visitor figures be provided.

## **7. Board Membership (Reserved)**

CEO advised the Board that their reappointment was currently being discussed by the NSMC and Ministers and it is hoped that they should hear the outcome of these discussions shortly.

## **8. Staff Structure and Grading Review**

The CEO advised the Board that both Sponsor Departments and Departments of Finance had now agreed the BDS Review subject to some minor points of clarification and an IP Paper was being prepared for Ministerial Approval.

## **9. Pension Arrangements**

The CEO advised the Board that Sponsor Department and Finance Department approvals have now been given to proceed with a new LA pension scheme which would mirror the new North South Scheme and take into account the Agency's pay arrangements. Initial discussions have been made with PwC and it is hoped that the updated scheme could be brought forward by regulation early in 2006.

## **10. Audit Committee Meeting**

Jack Allen Chair if the Audit Committee gave an overview of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2005. He also advised the Board of the NIAO management letter following the Audit of the 2004 accounts and that confirmation was given that the only reason they were being qualified was the ongoing pension issue. John Pollock advised the Board that an Actuarial Review would commence shortly and this would be undertaken either by PwC or the Government Actuary.

The Audit Committee minutes were adopted.

Proposed Jack Allen  
Seconded Siobhan Logue

It was also reported that the Tender for Accountancy Support was undertaken through CPD and the successful tender would be appointed shortly pending an initial ratification meeting.

Ann McPherson gave a presentation and update on the 2005 finance position including income and expenditure and projected expenditure for the remainder of the financial year. She also advised the Board that assistance would be required to work on the asset register. It was estimated that the cost would not exceed £5k and the Board gave their approval to proceed on this basis.

Proposed Jack Allen  
Seconded Pat Griffin

## **11. Legislation (Reserved)**

CEO gave an update on the progress on the revision of the Foyle Bill. He highlighted the recent problems with differing legal opinions and thanked the Board for their assistance. It is hoped that clearance will be given to continue with the Order in Counsel and they will be kept informed on any developments.

The Board were also advised that the Licensing of Fishing Engines Regulations have now cleared by the Departmental Solicitors and IP Paper has now been prepared for ministerial approval.

## **12. Carlingford Regional Office**

The Board were advised that the closing date for the tender to recruit consultants to carry out a full Green Book Economic Appraisal was 23<sup>rd</sup> November with a final draft report due on 19<sup>th</sup> December.

The Board also considered the proposal to move offices to the vacant offices in the Marina. The current office space being rented is no longer adequate and for reasons including Health and Safety, parking and desk space for the new staff it was felt as an interim measure the Agency should proceed on this basis.

## **13. Omagh Weir**

The Board were advised that the Interreg funded Omagh Weir was now complete other than a snagging list. The Chair of the Board and the Chair of Omagh District Council to carry out the official opening in December with a date yet to be confirmed. All Board members will be invited to attend.

## **14. 2006 Angling Fair**

The Board considered the proposal to hold the third angling fair at the Agency HQ in mid March 2006 and gave their approval to incur expenditure up to £20k.

Proposed Andrew Ward  
Seconded Tarlach O'Crosain

## **15. Carlingford Presentation**

Barry Fox (Carlingford Inspector) gave the Board an overview of the Carlingford Catchment including points of interest and the work carried out by his team. He also gave a presentation on the newly purchased "Black Box" technology and how this will assist the Agency in tracking and monitoring the shellfish producers.

## **16. AOB**

### ***Business Targets 2005***

The Board discussed with the table of Business targets against outturns for 2005. Overall they were pleased with progress to date and were given detailed explanations on targets that had not been met.

### ***PR Communication***

The Board were advised that the tender process was nearing completion and it is hoped to appoint the consultants shortly. They were also advised that their views on positive communication would be forwarded to them ASAP.

### ***Board Computerisation***

The Board asked that the provision of either laptops or PCs for the members be considered. John Pollock advised that his initial costing would be in the region of £10k. However there would be some issues eg printers, training and broadband etc they would need to consider and these would be brought to the next Board meeting.

### **17. Date and Venue of Next Meeting**

Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2005 in Loughs Agency HQ