

# **41<sup>st</sup> MEETING OF THE FOYLE CARLINGFORD AND IRISH LIGHTS COMMISSION**

**Wednesday 07<sup>th</sup> March 2007 @ 11am**

**Loughs Agency Headquarters**

## **Attendees:**

### **Board**

Peter Savage (Chair)  
Jack Allen  
Siobhan Logue  
Jacqui McConville  
Joseph Martin  
Andrew Ward

### **Loughs Agency**

Derick Anderson CEO  
John Pollock  
Gerard Mills  
Barry Fox

Peter Savage opened the meeting extending best wishes to Gillian Simpson on her maternity leave.

## **1. Apologies**

Tarlach O'Crosain  
Dick Blakiston-Houston  
Frank Feely  
Patrick Griffin  
John McCartney

## **2. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes were agreed with.

Proposed Jack Allen  
Seconded Andrew Ward

## **3. Reserved Minutes**

The minutes were agreed.

Proposed Jack Allen  
Seconded Andrew Ward

#### **4. Matters Arising**

None

#### **5. Presentation – Primary Production in Northern Ireland Sea Loughs**

The Board were given a presentation by Elisa Capuzzo, PhD Student of Napier University, Edinburgh School of Life Sciences on Primary Production in Northern Ireland Sea Loughs. This project forms part of the SMILE project which provides models for Strangford, Belfast and Larne Loughs as well as Foyle and Carlingford and is being funded by the Loughs Agency in partnership with DARD/AFBI, Institute of Marine Research (Portugal), Plymouth Marine Laboratory and CSIR (South Africa) and will provide an important tool for the development of sustainable oyster and mussel fisheries in the Loughs.

The Board thanked Elisa and her supervisor Dr Richard Gowen of AFBI for a very interesting and informative presentation.

#### **6. CEO Report**

CEO advised the Board that the Foyle & Carlingford Fisheries Bill would be going to the House of Commons on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> March and the House of Lords on 15<sup>th</sup> March and final stage to be at the Seanad before 26<sup>th</sup> March.

CEO advised the Board that Londonderry Port and Harbour Commissioners believed that the draft Bill overlaps with their responsibilities. Following discussions, the Agency and LPHC have agreed to work together to resolve their concerns. The Board have agreed to have a joint Board meeting with the Board of LPHC. CEO to contact Brian McGrath and advise.

CEO updated the Board of recent North/South CEO's meeting. He advised that various targets had been set in anticipation of a Sectoral meeting being arranged in May. A working group meeting of the NSMC Secretariat and the Agency has been provisionally arranged for the 20<sup>th</sup> May, the Board will be updated on progress. The Board were advised that at previous meetings of the NSMC, Board members would have attended and on occasions given presentations to the Ministers, this may be the case again and again will be updated on progress.

CEO updated the Board on the Hardship Package and Cessation of the Interceptory Fishing for Salmon in the Foyle and Carlingford Areas. He advised the Board that the consultation period had been extended to the 16<sup>th</sup> March with over forty consultative responses being received to date, including anglers from Holland. He also advised the Board that a Draft Business Case for the Hardship Package had been prepared and was being considered by both sponsor Departments.

In view of the tight time constraints the Board instructed the Agency to proceed with the preparation of the necessary Regulations and the Business Case, having regard to the outcomes of the consultation process and submit to the Departments for their approval.

CEO advised the Board that there were still concerns over the numbers of adult salmon in the River Finn and an Article 6 Assessment is to be initiated in consultation with the local fishery owners, Board to be kept up to date with progress.

CEO reported that the study into the economic value of salmon fishing in partnership DCAL, FCB and NITB was nearing completion, the report should be available for the next Board meeting.

## **7. Director Updates**

The Board were provided with updates by the Senior Management Team each giving a brief overview on their relative areas.

### **Conservation & Protection**

The Board were provided with a brief report by CEO on behalf of John McCartney outlining enforcement actions from 2005 and 2006 and explaining comparative summary of catches and fish counter data in the Faughan, Finn, Sion Mills, Roe and Corrick areas. He also advised that the River Finn had a good opening day on the 1<sup>st</sup> March with nine salmon caught. John McCartney currently in Norway with LPHC viewing some of the Fish Processing Plants similar to those proposed for Lisahally, he will provide the Board with an update of his visit on his return.

### **Development**

Gerard Mills provided an update to the Board on the Marine Tourism consultation, the comments received to date have been forwarded to Tourism Development International who drafted the original report and the final draft will be brought to the Board for their consideration. Gerard Mills to meet with Andrew Ward to discuss the Strategy in more detail.

He advised the Board that the terms of reference is being developed for a baseline study to assess the effectiveness of the Agency and this will inform the Communications Strategy.

The Board were also provided with a table of projects that may be rolled out over the coming years and discussions have taken place with SEUPB on possible EU funding.

## **Aquaculture**

Barry Fox gave an overview of progress to date in relation to aquaculture. Work to commence shortly on the drafting of regulations and these will be brought to the Board for their consideration. The illegal movement of mussels was also raised and he advised the Board that DARD Fisheries Division are monitoring with a view to prosecuting the vessel operators.

Barry Fox reported that the members of the Aquaculture Focus Groups would like to arrange a meeting with the Board. It was agreed by the Board that the focus group should put their request in writing detailing the topic for discussion. The Board will then consider this request and respond in writing or have a meeting arranged.

Barry Fox advised the Board that he was having difficulty making contact with the Agents of the Crown Estates Commissioners and will continue to follow up on this issue.

The Board were advised that numbers attending the Seafood Expo in Brussels should be restricted. It was agreed that Jack Allen and Andrew Ward would represent the Board with Barry Fox in attendance.

Proposed: Siobhan Logue  
Seconded: Jacqui McConville

## **Corporate Services**

John Pollock provided the Board with a table of progress in this area to date, the main points being:

- 2005 Accounts were signed off by the C&AgS on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February this will be followed by an IP Paper to be approved by Ministers.
- The Audit and Finance Sub-committee meeting has been arranged for the 15<sup>th</sup> March at the Agency's Headquarters.
- The finalisation of recruitment for a Corporate Services Manager and Development Officer is underway and will be completed shortly.

## **8. Bill consultation response from DARD**

Board were provided with DARD's response to the Boards comments that were submitted in relation to consultation on the Foyle and Carlingford Fisheries Order.

## **9. Health & Safety Policy**

The Board considered the draft Health & Safety Policy and agreed its adoption.

Proposed: Jacqui McConville

Seconded: Jack Allen

## **10. Enforcement Policy**

The Board were provided with a draft Enforcement Policy for the Agency which broadly mirror images the work of similar agencies in Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Scotland and England. The Board were advised that the policy will hopefully be the cornerstone of uniformity of enforcement action for the Agency, and will be supported by a set of procedures for staff.

Proposed: Jack Allen

Seconded: Joseph Martin

## **11. Section 75 Five Year Review**

The Board were provided with the Agency's Section 75 Five Year Review. They were given an update on progress with regard to Equality and promotion of good relations and the difficulties experienced with the consultation process. The Board commended the Agency on its work in these areas and gave their approval to the draft report.

Proposed: Joseph Martin

Seconded: Jacqui McConville

John Pollock advised the Board that he had been invited to participate in the newly formed Age Equality Forum, this was approved by the Board.

## **12. Conflict of Interest**

The Board were asked to complete their conflict of interest declarations as soon as possible, blank copies provided with Board papers.

### **13. Business Plan Update**

The Board were provided with a table of outturn against business targets to date and were advised that these will develop as the year progresses.

The Board considered the Agency's Mission and Values Statement, they agreed to keep the Mission Statement as is and adopt the Values Statement for the forthcoming Corporate Plan.

Proposed: Joseph Martin

Seconded: Jack Allen

### **14. Presentation on the Lisahally Fish Processing Plant**

Declan Lawlor, Environmental Research Officer gave a presentation on the proposed fish processing plant at Lisahally and the ongoing consultation. The Board will be kept up to date on the progress of this issue.

### **15. Minutes of Advisory Forum Meeting 10/01/07**

The Board were provided with the minutes of the Advisory Forum meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> January 2007. CEO reported that the members of the Forum would like a Board Member to attend their meetings. It was agreed by the Board that the Forum Members should put their request in writing. The Board will then consider this request and respond in writing or have a meeting arranged.

### **16. A.O.B**

The Board discussed the accommodation difficulties with the current Carlingford office. Gerard Mills provided the Board with an analysis of costs for alternative accommodation in the same area, the Board agreed to proceed with the most cost effective option, Magee Court.

Proposed: Siobhan Logue

Seconded: Jacqui McConville

### **17. Date and Venue of next meeting**

Wednesday 09<sup>th</sup> May 2007 at 11am Ballymascanlon Hotel, Dundalk