

**Reserved**

**37<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE FOYLE CARLINGFORD AND IRISH LIGHTS  
COMMISSION**

**Wednesday 30th August 2006 @ 11am**

**At**

**Loughs Agency HQ Prehen**

**Present**

**Board**

Peter Savage (Chairperson)

Jacqui McConville

Dick Blakiston-Houston

Jack Allen

Tarlach O'Crosain

Pat Griffin

Andrew Ward

Joseph Martin

**Loughs Agency**

Derick Anderson CEO

John Pollock

Paddy Boylan

Gillian Simpson

**1. Apologies**

Siobhan Logue

**2. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes were agreed

Proposed Pat Griffin

Seconded Tarlach O'Crosain

**3. Reserved Minutes**

None

**4. Matters Arising**

CEO provided a report from Wendy Austin (BBC Radio Ulster) who acted as facilitator at the Marine Tourism Conference recently held in Carlingford

and advised that a further audit of Carlingford Lough which is being completed by Dundalk Chamber of Commerce will be complete by the end of October. The Board also commented that the Mourne National Park should be linked to the Cooley Mountains and this would become a unique selling point.

## **5. CEO Report**

Counter figures provided (now available on the web site [www.loughs-agency.org](http://www.loughs-agency.org)) Runs excellent before June then followed by a quiet period possibly due to low rainfall. However all targets were met but no extension to the commercial netting season. Omagh counter will be operational shortly as soon as temporary power is sourced.

With regard to the issues surrounding interceptory fishing the Agency is currently preparing a paper and using historic data from 1938 to date. This will be provided to the Board at their next meeting for their consideration.

Strabane / Lifford – this issue is still unresolved – a draft management agreement has been provided however the club has refused to meet with the councils to discuss.

CEO Reported on the threats to staff and the measures now in place including liaison with PSNI and Garda. The Board condemned these threats and gave their full support to all the staff.

Proposed Fish Meal Plant Lisahally – the Agency advised the Board of concerns with this proposal and the extent of the fresh water intake and discharge from the plant. The EIA was unsatisfactory and the Agency is liaising with EHS, DOE and Derry city Council. CEO to keep the Board advised of position.

Environmental Governance Review – CEO and paddy Boylan gave a presentation to and were interviewed by the review team. Transcripts of the interviews and initial recommendation are available on the web site [www.regni.info](http://www.regni.info)

CEO reported on a success story where the quick actions of the Agency staff prevented a major fish kill on the River Strule. The newly purchased aeration equipment was deployed following a discharge into the river. The Board congratulated the staff for all their efforts. Samples have been taken with a view to prosecution.

With reference to Bonamia in Lough Foyle CEO advised the Board that a report is currently being prepared by DCMNR, Marine Institute, Loughs Agency, DARD for submission to the EU detailing the investigations, finding and any resulting actions. Copies of the final report will be provided the Board when available.

## **6. Recruitment**

Reserved

## **7. Foyle and Carlingford Fisheries Bill**

Reserved

## **8. Staffing Review & Retrospection**

Reserved

## **9. Pension Update**

Reserved

## **10. North South Pay Review**

Reserved

## **11. Advisory Forum**

CEO reported that the recruitment of the Advisory Forum was now complete with a good mix of stakeholders from both catchments. The first meeting of the new forum is planned for 4<sup>th</sup> October.

## **12. Finance Update**

**2005 Accounts** – The Board were advised that the audit is now complete with a few minor amendments to be inserted and it is anticipated that the final sign off by the C&AgS will be before the end of October. The Board were also asked to note that a considerable amount of preparatory work has already gone into the 2006 accounts in planning for the end of the financial year and the Agency anticipates that these accounts will be ready for audit in February 2006 (one month ahead of target).

**Bank transfer** – the transfer to the new bank is well under way with all direct debits moved by the end of September. Cheques are currently being

printed and it is estimated that the full transfer will be complete by the end of October. It is also planned to keep some of the old accounts open to allow for any uncashed cheques from the final payment schedules.

**Finance Update** – the Board were provided with additional papers detailing the current bank position and income and expenditure to date. They were also advised of the projected spend for the remainder of the year and potential surrender. They asked that this be reviewed in October once the position surrounding the retrospection and the purchase of the Carlingford site was clear.

**Fraud Update** – The Board were provided with an update on the attempted frauds and the ongoing PSNI & Garda investigations.

### **13. Carlingford Office Economic Appraisal**

The Board were advised that there were some small amendments to the draft provided by Deloitte and would be resubmitted shortly to the Depts for their consideration and necessary approvals. The Board asked that the Depts be advised that time is limited and outline planning permission expires in 2007.

### **14. Survey Vessel Economic Appraisal**

CEO Reported that FPM Consultants have been recruited to draft the Economic Appraisal and work has already commenced on the preparation of the report. Once completed it will be submitted to both Depts for the necessary approvals.

### **15. Riverwatch**

Gillian Simpson presented to the Board an update on the work of Riverwatch and the various outreach projects that are planned for the remainder of the year and early 2007.

The Board considered the business case for an additional centre piece aquarium for the interpretive centre up to £98k ex vat and gave their approval to proceed with the tender process. They also gave their approval to develop phase 3 option and source potential funds through NITB.

Proposed Dick Blakiston-Houston  
Seconded Pat Griffin

## 16. AOB

- A, The Board gave their approval to the final draft of the Agency's **Training and Development Policy** and also the request to offer to staff an excellent training opportunity in fishery management. This course will be provided by Sligo college of further education and they gave their approval to fund 2 places.

Proposed Peter savage  
Seconded Tarlach O'Crosain

- B, The Board were provided with final draft copies of the Agency's **Complaints Procedure** and this would be available on the web site.
- C, The Board were provided with the final draft of the Agency's **FOI Publication Scheme and Code of Practice** and were advised that these would be available on the web site.
- D, The Board considered a request to continue the Agency's support for the **Blue Fin Tuna Survey** of the NW Coast and gave their approval for a further £2k.

Proposed Joseph Martin  
Seconded Andrew Ward

- E, The Board raised a concern regarding trawlers taking large amounts of **sand eels** and CEO agreed to raise this with the Agency's Scientific Advisors and report back.
- F, The Board agreed to provide financial assistance for the Carlingford Oyster & Jazz festival up to a value of €4k. The event is being organised by The Cooley Peninsula Carlingford Tourism Association Ltd All promotional material will include the Loughs Agency Logo and any press releases will include the Agency.

Proposed Andrew Ward  
Seconded Tarlach O'Crosain

## 17. Date of next Meeting

October date & venue to be arranged note: an early meeting may be required as the sponsor Depts may wish to brief the Board on the draft Bill.