

111th MEETING OF THE FOYLE CARLINGFORD AND IRISH LIGHTS COMMISSION

Wednesday 5th September 2018 at 11am

NSMC Offices, Armagh

Attendees

Present

Andrew Duncan (Vice Chairman)
Alastair Patterson
Fiona Walsh
Heather Mackey
Ian McCrea
Michael McCormick
Patrick Gibbons
Phil Mahon

In Attendance - Loughs Agency

Sharon McMahon – Designated Officer
John McCartney – Director of Conservation and Protection
Kevin Wilson – Director of Development
Barry Fox – Director of Aquaculture and Shellfisheries
Laura McCready (Minutes)

Private Time for Board Members

The Board availed of its private time before the Board Meeting commenced. Following this the Vice Chairman advised that Board Members would like a Strategic Meeting with the Designated Officer before the end of 2018 or in early 2019. Designated Officer advised that it was also her intention to arrange this meeting.

1. Apologies

Allan Ewart
Mick Murphy
Terry McWilliams
JP O'Doherty – Interim Director of Corporate Services

2. Conflict of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest with any agenda items.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

Proposed Patrick Gibbons
Seconded Fiona Walsh

4. Reserved Minutes

The reserved minutes from the previous meeting were agreed by all.

Proposed Patrick Gibbons
Seconded Fiona Walsh

5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

6. CEO Report

2017 Annual Report and Accounts

Designated Officer advised that she was pleased to report that the Agency's 2017 Annual Report and Accounts had been signed off by both Comptroller and Auditor General's Office, following one minor amendment regarding the Remuneration Report.

Budgetary Pressures

Designated Officer advised that the Agency was currently facing considerable budgetary pressure, which has resulted in the reallocation of resource monies and the cessation of planned projects which had not yet commenced. She added that the Agency has made a bid to Sponsor Departments for inescapable salary costs, which together with the reallocation of resource monies should ease the pressures to the end of the year. She assured the Board that all spend, without exception, is being closely monitored on a week by week basis. Designated Officer reported that the Agency continues to discuss the annual budget allocation and the need for a sustainable solution to the payroll budget with Sponsor Departments. She concluded that she has been advised by Sponsor Departments that without a functioning NSMC there is currently no mechanism to increase the salaries baseline budget.

Strategic Planning

Designated Officer advised that the Senior Management Team had commenced work on the 2019 Business Plan. She added that she hoped to have a draft Plan with Board Members prior to the Agency's Staff Conference on 5th October 2018. She added that following this a Strategic Planning day would be arranged for the Board, prior to the next Board Meeting. Designated Officer advised that at this meeting the long-term strategic plan for the Agency would be discussed, in preparation for drafting the next Corporate Plan, as 2019 would be the final year of the current Corporate Plan.

Patrick Gibbons advised that when this had been discussed at the Board's pre meeting, Members had suggested that this meeting take place in early 2019, however he now sees the need for the meeting to take place before the end of 2018. Patrick asked if the DAERA Board would be meeting with Loughs Agency Board during 2018, as this had been planned for 2017 but did not occur. Designated Officer advised that the Permanent Secretary had alluded to this in a recent letter, and hoped that this would take place in autumn 2018.

Ian McCrea suggested that a facilitator may be useful for the Strategic Planning meeting. Designated Officer agreed.

Designated Officer Engagements

Designated Officer advised that she had recently met with the CEO's of both Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and Louth County Council, who were both keen to work with Loughs Agency in future projects. She added that Louth County Council were particularly keen to assist the Agency in any way it could, regarding locating temporary or permanent accommodation in the Carlingford area.

Commonwealth Fly Fishing Championships

Designated Officer advised that the above event was currently taking place in the Foyle catchment. She added that she had attended the opening ceremony on 2nd September, and was due to attend the closing ceremony and prize giving event on 7th September 2018.

Sea Monitor

Designated Officer wished to acknowledge the work and congratulate Dr Patrick Boylan, the Agency's Senior Biologist on his success of securing £4.7m INTERREG funding for the above

project. She added that the Agency had received a Letter of Comfort from SEUPB, which would be followed by a Letter of Offer when the final work plan was complete.

Pension Augmentation
RESERVED

7. Directors' Reports

The Vice Chairman advised the Board that Members had been provided with the Directors' Reports and asked if Members had any questions, or issues, they wished to raise with the Directors.

Development

Kevin Wilson, Director of Development asked if there were any questions in relation to his report.

Heather Mackey advised that she was disappointed at the lack of information in the Marketing and Communications section of the Development Report. She asked that going forward that there is more detail and information. Heather also asked that a list of the Agency run events and events attended by the Agency be provided to the Board, so that they were aware of what is coming up.

Heather advised that she had attended the Foyle Maritime Festival in Derry~Londonderry during July 2018. She advised that it was an amazing event but unfortunately the PR and marketing of Loughs Agency was poor and unnoticeable. She added that she had taken part in some of the on water activities sponsored by Loughs Agency, however she was unaware that the Agency had sponsored these events due to the lack of branding, which was unfortunate.

Michael McCormick agreed and advised that he has highlighted this on a number of occasions. He added that the Agency has arranged fantastic events in the past, however due to the lack of branding the public are unaware that the Agency are funding or lead partners in these events.

Vice Chairman asked if there was an adequate marketing budget. Kevin Wilson advised that the marketing budget was ever reducing and he would welcome additional funds. He added that the Foyle Maritime Festival was a Derry City and Strabane District Council

event, with Loughs Agency featuring in all the brochures, website, social media etc. as sponsoring on water activities. Kevin reported that the Agency had worked with companies from the private sector to sponsor on water events and therefore the names of these companies were also on display at these events. Heather Mackey disagreed with this approach and advised that Loughs Agency staff should ensure that the Agency is at the forefront at all these events. She added that the event was well organised however, there needed to be a vast improvement in PR. She also suggested that as the marketing budget had been reduced the Agency should sponsor / organise less events e.g. arrange 2 really good events instead of 10 poor events.

Vice Chairman suggested that going forward the Agency draft a Sponsorship Policy whereby it highlights that the Board has asked for a minimum requirement, in terms of sponsorship. He suggested that the Agency purchase some permanent marketing material and build on this year on year. Board Members agreed that social media was a good platform for advertising, however the Agency needed to have banners and materials that could be moved from event to event to promote the Agency.

Proposed Patrick Gibbons
Seconded Michael McCormick

There were no further questions / comments in relation to this report.

Aquaculture and Shellfisheries

Barry Fox, Director of Aquaculture and Shellfisheries asked if there were any questions in relation to his report.

RESERVED

There were no further questions / comments in relation to this report.

Conservation and Protection

John McCartney, Director of Conservation and Protection, asked if there were any questions in relation to his report.

There were no questions / comments in relation to this report.

Corporate Services

JP O'Doherty, Interim Director of Corporate Services sent his apologies. Designated Officer asked if there were any questions in relation to JP's report.

There were no questions/comments in relation to this report.

8. Finance Update

The Board was provided with a financial outturn report up to mid-August 2018. There were no comments / questions in relation to this report.

9. Risk Register Update

Designated Officer advised the Board that the next Risk Management Team Meeting was scheduled to take place on 11th September 2018, just before the next Audit and Risk Committee Meeting. She added that Audit and Risk Committee Members would be provided with the updated Corporate Risk Register together with the Operational Risk Registers at this meeting for discussion.

10. Outturn Against Targets

Board Members were provided with copies of the most up to date Outturn Against Targets for their information.

11. Audit and Risk Committee Update

Phil Mahon, Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee gave Board Members a short update regarding the provision of an Internal Audit function for the Agency. She added that this would be discussed in detail at the forthcoming Committee Meeting on 18th September 2018, and she would report to the Board at its next meeting.

12. Strule Trust Update

Designated Officer advised that she had met with the Strule Trust on 2nd August 2018, where the issues that had been raised by the Audit and Risk Committee were discussed in detail.

RESERVED

Designated Officer suggested that Members of the Trust make a presentation at a Board Meeting. Vice Chairman confirmed that they could present at the beginning of a Meeting. Patrick Gibbons congratulated the Designated Officer on her achievements to date with the Trust.

13. DAERA Flood Damage Project Update

Barry Fox provided the Board with a paper on the above for information. He added that the first meeting of the Project Board had taken place on 30th August 2018 where a work plan had been agreed. Barry advised that the specifications for these works would be forwarded to Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) in the following days, as works had to be completed before 31st December 2018.

14. AOB

There were no further items of business.

15. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board will be held on Wednesday 24th October in Louth County Council Offices, Dundalk.

Item No	Action	Responsible	Expected Delivery Date
6	Designated Officer to forward 2019 Draft Business Plan to Board Members prior to 5 th October 2018.	Designated Officer	Before 05.10.18
6	Date to be set for Board Members Strategic Planning Day prior to next Board Meeting.	Designated Officer	Before 24.10.18
7	A list of Agency run events or events attended by the Agency to be prepared for Board Members.	Kevin Wilson	24.10.18 and at the beginning of each year going forward.
7	Sponsorship Policy to be drafted.	Kevin Wilson	24.10.18