

**124th MEETING OF THE FOYLE CARLINGFORD AND IRISH
LIGHTS COMMISSION**

Friday 18th December 2020 at 9.30am

Via Teleconference

Attendees

Present

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

In Attendance - Loughs Agency

Sharon McMahon – Designated Officer
Laura McCready (Minutes)

Private Time for Board Members

The Board did not avail of private time before the Board Meeting commenced.

1. Apologies

Michael McCormick

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 Allan Ewart
Seconded Phil Mahon

4. Reserved Minutes

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

Proposed Allan Ewart
Seconded Phil Mahon

5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

6. CEO Progress Report

Prior to the Board Meeting Board Members were provided with a comprehensive overview of current significant issues, strategic updates and governance and accountability updates from the Designated Officer.

Review of Communications

Designated Officer advised the Board that the Agency has awarded a tender to complete a review of the Agency's communications. She added that she will contact Heather Mackey in early 2021 to commence the review.

Heather welcomed this and advised that she will meet with the appointed contractor, either in person or by videoconference, depending on COVID-19 restrictions, prior to the review commencing.

Protection Plan 2021-23

Prior to the Board Meeting Board Members were provided with a copy of the above for their review and approval. Designated Officer advised that the Plan was presented to the Audit and Risk Committee following a request from the Committee and from there was recommended to Board for approval.

Patrick Gibbons, Chairman of the Audit and Risk Committee advised that following the attendance of the Director of Conservation and Protection at an Audit and Risk Committee Meeting in late 2019, the Committee requested a Protection Plan for 2020. He added that an initial Plan was received by the Committee and following further requested amendments a 2021-23 Protection Plan has now been received and agreed by Committee Members.

Board Members welcomed and approved the Protection Plan.

Proposed Patrick Gibbons

Seconded Fiona Walsh

Code of Conduct (Board Members)

Prior to the Board Meeting Board Members were provided with a copy of the above for their review and approval. Designated Officer advised that this document has been recommended by the Audit and Risk Committee to the Board for approval.

Patrick Gibbons, Chairman of the Audit and Risk Committee advised that at the last meeting of each year, the Audit and Risk Committee review and amend, where necessary, the Code of Conduct for Board Members. Board Members agreed the proposed amendments made by the Audit and Risk Committee.

Proposed Fiona Walsh

Seconded Heather Mackey

2021 Business Plan

Prior to the Board Meeting Board Members were provided with a copy of the above for their review and approval. Designated Officer advised that following amendments requested by the Board, the Plan was submitted to Sponsor Departments for their approval, with a view to it being presented and approved by the North South Ministerial Council at its last meeting of 2020.

Designated Officer advised that unfortunately, given the short timeframe the Plan has not yet been agreed by both Sponsor Departments, however asked that Board Members approval of the 2021 Business Plan be formally recorded at today's Board Meeting.

Proposed Phil Mahon

Seconded Heather Mackey

Designated Officer advised that Board Members will be provided with a copy of the Plan if any further amendments are requested by Sponsor Departments.

Recruitments

Designated Officer advised that the Agency currently has 3 active recruitments, Head of Science, IT Manager and a temporary Marine

Scientist. She added that there has been a lot of interest in the posts which all close in January 2021.

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Board Appointments

Designated Officer advised that the Agency was informed of 2 appointments to the Board. She added that Laurence Arbuckle was appointed as Chairman of the Board and Terry McWilliams was reappointed as a Board Member at a North South Ministerial Council Meeting on the 16th December 2020.

Designated Officer reported that both gentlemen have been appointed for a 5 year term. She added that Laurence has been informed that he will be Chairman for 1 year and a Board Member for the remainder of his term.

Board Members welcomed the update and look forward to the first Board Meeting of 2021 to welcome both gentlemen back on to the Board.

Fiona Walsh thanked the Vice Chairman for the tremendous role that he has carried out as Acting Chair. The Board echoed these sentiments.

7. Finance Update

Board Members were provided with a Budget Report up to the end of November 2020 and a capital projects update, prior to the Board Meeting.

Board Members were also provided with a draft list of proposed capital and resource projects for 2021 for their approval.

Proposed Ian McCrea
Seconded Allan Ewart

Patrick Gibbons highlighted an overspend in relation to the SeaMonitor Project and asked for an explanation in relation to same.

Designated Officer provided an overview of the SeaMonitor budget and advised that this is a technical issue in relation to a budget modification request and not an overspend. She added that the period 12 claim submitted to the funder, to which the modification refers, was subsequently received 2 days prior to the Board Meeting.

Patrick thanked the Designated Officer for the explanation.

8. Risk Register Update

Board Members were provided with the individual Directors' Operational Risk Registers and overall Corporate Risk Register prior to the Board Meeting for information.

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Designated Officer advised that she will take this on board and revisit this risk.

9. Performance Framework Update

Board Members were provided with copies of the Performance Framework templates as completed by Directors, prior to the Board Meeting for their information.

There were no questions or comments in relation to same.

10. Audit and Risk Committee Update

Patrick Gibbons, Chairman of the Audit and Risk Committee advised that ordinarily Board Members receive the minutes of the previous Audit and Risk Committee Meeting with their Board Papers, however the last Committee Meeting was rescheduled due to the lack of a quorum, therefore he only received the minutes of this meeting late last night.

Patrick advised that Board Members will receive a copy of the minutes prior to the next Board Meeting, however provided Board Members with an overview of the meeting.

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11. External Funding Update

The Board was provided with an update on the SeaMonitor, CatchmentCARE and SWELL projects prior to the meeting for information. There were no questions or comments in relation to same.

12. Press Releases

Prior to the Board Meeting, Board Members were provided with a copy of press releases published since the previous Board Meeting and a copy of recent press clippings from the media in relation to the Agency for their information. There were no questions or comments in relation to same.

13. AOB

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Closing Remarks

Vice Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and wished to thank the Members for their input and support during his term as Acting Chair. He wished Members a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year with their families and hoped to see everyone again in 2021.

14. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

Designated Officer advised that Board Members will be provided with a list of dates for Board Meetings in early 2021.

Item No	Action	Responsible	Expected Delivery Date
6	Contact Heather Mackey in relation to the review of communications.	Designated Officer	January 2021
6	Provide Board Members with copy of 2021 Business Plan following any amendments by Sponsor Departments.	Designated Officer	ASAP
6	RESERVED	Laura McCready	February 2021
6	RESERVED	Designated Officer	ASAP
8	RESERVED	Designated Officer	ASAP