

134th MEETING OF THE FOYLE CARLINGFORD AND IRISH LIGHTS COMMISSION

Thursday 23rd February 2023 at 4.30pm

City Hotel, Derry~Londonderry

Attendees

Present

Heather Mackey (Chair)
Conor Corr
Danny Kennedy
Fiona Walsh (via videoconference)
Frances Lucy
Jack Keyes
Laurence Arbuckle
Niall Greene

In Attendance - Loughs Agency

Sharon McMahon – Chief Executive Officer
Laura McCready (Minutes)

Non Attendance

Terry McWilliams

1. Apologies

Declan Little

Private Time for Board Members

The Board did not avail of private time.

Chair welcomed everyone to the Board Meeting and began proceedings by congratulating Sharon McMahon on her appointment as Chief Executive Officer. The Chair asked the Board to ratify the appointment formally at today's meeting.

The Board unanimously approved the appointment of Sharon McMahon as Chief Executive Officer of Loughs Agency and congratulated her on her appointment.

Chair took the Board through the recruitment process which was administered by the Public Appointments Service (PAS).

Jack Keyes congratulated the CEO on her appointment and advised that he has been involved in many recruitments through PAS, who provide a very thorough and fair system of recruitment.

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 Niall Greene

Seconded Laurence Arbuckle

3.1 Reserved Minutes

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

Proposed Laurance Arbuckle

Seconded Conor Corr

3.2 Matters Arising

All matters arising from the previous meeting were complete.

4. CEO Progress Report

RESERVED

RESERVED

Carlingford Office

CEO reported that Sponsor Departments have asked the Agency to provide a further addendum to the Carlingford Business Case. She added that the Agency is currently liaising with the Architect to establish if the quote from the appointed contractor remains valid.

RESERVED

4.1 Corporate Plan 2023-25

Prior to the Board Meeting Board Members were provided with the Draft Corporate Plan 2023-25.

RESERVED

4.2 Business Plan 2023

This item was discussed under agenda item 4.1.

5. Senior Management Team Updates

Prior to the Board Meeting Board Members were provided with a number of documents for their information.

5.1 Oyster Trestles

RESERVED

5.2 Fisheries and Angling Improvement Projects 2022

Prior to the meeting the Board were provided with several examples of fisheries and angling improvement projects carried out during 2022 for their information.

5.3 Angling Improvement Fund 2023

Prior to the meeting Board Members were provided with the above Expression of Interest form for their information. CEO advised that the Angling Improvement Fund (AIF) is generated from the coarse and game fishing licence income and provides a direct benefit to anglers. She added that during 2022 Loughs Agency reinvested over £85,000 in angling related projects from this fund.

CEO advised that in 2023 Loughs Agency is continuing to seek project ideas from clubs, fisheries and other partners to improve local fish stocks and angling opportunities.

6. Finance Update

Prior to the Board Meeting Board Members were provided with a Budget Report up to the end of December 2022.

Frances Lucy asked if the outstanding claims from the INTERREG funded projects are a risk to the Agency. CEO advised that this is a risk, particularly with the Agency's budget issues. She added that SeaMonitor, CatchmentCARE and SWELL all complete in Q1 of 2023 and it is hoped that all claims will be paid promptly.

7. Risk Register Update

Prior to the Board Meeting Board Members were provided with the Corporate Risk Register for information.

In relation to CR8, Frances Lucy advised that some of the information relating to COVID-19 is outdated. CEO agreed however advised that the Agency does not have a Hybrid Working Policy in place as yet.

Danny Kennedy asked what percentage of staff are currently working from home. He added that in a number of organisations staff have returned to the office on a full-time basis. CEO advised that most Loughs Agency staff are field based and therefore were back full time since May 2020. She added that the remainder of office-based staff are now back in the office 2 days per week.

8. Audit and Risk Committee Update

Frances Lucy, Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) advised that the next ARC Meeting is scheduled to take place on 15th March 2023. She added that she will provide an update on same at the next Board Meeting.

9. Communications

Prior to the Board Meeting Board Members were provided with Communications Reports for November and December 2022 and January 2023.

Niall Greene asked if Gray's Communications can provide the Board with some metrics on social engagement in their Communications Reports going forward.

10. Policies

Prior to the Board Meeting Board Members were provided with the below Policy for their review and approval if content.

Code of Conduct Policy (Board Members)

Proposed Laurence Arbuckle
Seconded Frances Lucy

11. AOB

International Standards on Auditing Queries of Those Charged with Governance

Chair advised that she recently received a letter and spreadsheet from Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) for her information and completion. She added that to comply with the above standards NIAO is required to make enquiries of those charged with governance of their knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud.

There was a discussion in relation to same where the Board agreed the responses to the questions within the spreadsheet.

12. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next Board Meeting will take place on Wednesday 3rd May 2023 at 9.30am via teleconference.

Item No	Action	Responsible	Expected Delivery Date
4.1	RESERVED		
9	Provide Board with social media engagement metrics in future communications reports.	Gray's Communications	May 2023