

MEETING NO. 6

AGREED MINUTES

DATE: 9th January 2018

TIME: 10.30 am

LOCATION: Ashling Hotel, Dublin

PRESENT

Dr. Tom Collins (Chairperson)

Francis O'Donnell, Tim Fenn, Jonathan Small, Dr. Tim Butter and Dr. Suzanne Linnane, Barry Deane, Connie Rochford, Neil Walker, Patrick Rohan, Thomas Cooney, Bernadette Connolly, Ollan Herr, Charles Stanley Smith, Dr. Thomas Harrington, Liam Berney, Gerald Quain, and Martin McEnroe.

APO LOGIES

Mindy O'Brien, Michael Spellman, Keith Hyland, Jean Rosney, Derry Dillon, Sinead O'Brien, David Wright, Brendan Fitzsimons, Kevin Ryan.

IN ATTENDANCE

Sharon Kennedy (NWF)

Item		Details	Action
1.1	Welcome and Apologies	Tom Collins welcomed all to the meeting and thanked the members for their attendance. He noted that quite a number of apologies have been received with a number of members unable to attend due to ill health. It was agreed to issue a letter of sympathy to Mindy O'Brien on her recent bereavement.	Noted
1.2	Consideration of draft minutes of meeting no. 5 held on the 21st November 2017.	The draft minutes were agreed.	Agreed
1.3	Matters arising	It was noted that any issues arising have been placed on the agenda.	Noted.
1.4	Update meeting with OPW	Dr. Collins advised that he and Sharon Kennedy had attended a meeting with the OPW (Nathy Gilligan, John Murphy and Mark Adamson) during Christmas week. The meeting had been most informative and a number of issues with regard to flood relief project management etc had been discussed. An invitation has been extended for a presentation by the OPW at the February	Noted. Agenda item for next meeting.

		<p>meeting of An Fóram and we await confirmation with regard to same.</p> <p>The members discussed an issue with regard to contradictions concerning policy and activity in relation to planting on flood plains and it was agreed that this issue would be included for consideration in the 2018 work programme to be discussed later in the meeting and would also be discussed with LAWCO.</p>	
1.5	To note submission on Nitrates Action Plan.	<p>Dr. Collins referred, for noting, the submission from An Fóram in relation to the Nitrates Action Plan which had been circulated to all. It was agreed that the position with regard to same would be advised at the next meeting of An Fóram.</p>	Noted and for update at the February meeting.
1.6	Budget and work programme for 2018	<p>Sharon Kennedy presented the submission to the Department with regard to Budgetary requirements for An Fóram for 2018 in the sum of €300,000. The main headings being as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee meeting, travel and training expenses - €68,000 • Public engagement programme - €15,000 • Conference Cost - €10,000 • Research/policy development costs - €50,000 • Annual report/ translation services/advertising - €8,000 • Chairmans project - €12,000 • SEO salary, office expenses, admin support, ICT expenses etc - €137,000. <p>It was noted that the Department have not yet confirmed the budget but that it was likely that most or all of the requirements will be met. While the provisions with regard to same were welcomed, concern was expressed that the provision of €50,000 for research projects might be insufficient. It was noted that there may be potential to re-direct budgetary provisions from elsewhere in the budget should this be required and/or to approach the Department for a supplementary budget, based on specific requirements. It was agreed that these concerns can be addressed in the context of the work programme.</p>	Noted and for further action in relation to the budget, working group and work programme. Agenda item for update at February meeting
		<p>Sharon then outlined a list of indicative items which have arisen since An Fóram was established and which might form part of a Research/ policy development programme as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pesticides and insecticides residues in drinking water; • Micro plastics in water; • Invasive species management in waterways; • Water pricing for commercial water users; • Environmental remediation strategies for contaminated sites threatening waterways; • Phosphate recovery strategies in waste water treatment; • Flood relief measures and impact on waterbodies; • Source protection for private drinking supplies; • Enabling citizen science. 	

		<p>Following on from same, it was agreed that the following additional items be added to the list – Water abstractions/river management Endocrine disrupters ; Coastal erosion; Afforestation; National Schools Curriculum – inclusion of environmental awareness etc. ; Water Conservation; Phosphorus removal in relation to domestic waste water (pilot study – 2019 programme) Addressing the gap between research, policy development and implementation.</p> <p>It was noted that as quite a number of the members were not present, this list would be circulated to all for further comment and suggestions.</p> <p>It was also noted that the development and management of the work programme will form a significant and demanding input from the members of An Fóram but that the success of An Fóram will be inextricably linked to the progression of a defined work programme.</p> <p>Accordingly, it was agreed to establish a working group to manage the work programme in terms of defining the possible issues for inclusion, the prioritisation of the items on the list, the management of the way in which each item is addressed and ultimately making recommendations to the Forum in relation to each item selected. It was noted that it was unlikely that An Fóram will be carrying out any primary research as in most instances there is already a huge repository of research, data, information and evidence available. The group will comprise of the following members and will be supported by the Secretariat – Tom Collins, Sinead O’Brien, Charles Stanley Smith, Martin McEnroe, Gerald Quain, Suzanne Linnane, Francis O’Donnell and Thomas Cooney. The first meeting of the group will take place in early February with a report on progress at the meeting on the 20th February.</p> <p>At this point, it was noted that Patrick Rohan will be stepping down as the ICMSA nominee to An Fóram as his chairmanship of the rural affairs committee has ended and Denis Drennan, the new chair of that committee will be the ICMSA nominee going forward. Dr. Collins thanked Patrick for his commitment and input in An Fóram and regretted that he would no longer be a member of same. He also extended a welcome to Mr. Drennan who will be invited to attend the next meeting of An Fóram.</p>	
1.7	Symposium	Dr. Collins referred to the enactment of the Water Services Act 2017 and in particular to the formal establishment of An Fóram	Update to be provided at

		and the abolition of the Public Water Forum and National Rural Water Services Committee. It was noted that this will most likely occur in March or early April. Dr. Collins outlined his proposals to arrange for a symposium to be attended by the members of An Fóram and the PWF at that time. He advised that he is making contact with the Scottish Water Forum to invite their Chair to attend and present at the symposium along with other invitees. Further update will be provided at the February meeting.	February meeting.
2	To receive update regard Group Water Schemes subsidies.	This item was initially deferred to the afternoon due to time constraints and at that stage, as the number of members in attendance had fallen below the quorum requirement it was agreed, with Barry Deane's agreement, to defer this item to the February meeting.	Agenda item for February meeting.
3	Presentation from Mary McMahon and Stephen Harding on behalf of Irish water	<p>Dr. Collins welcomed Mary McMahon and Stephen Harding to present on Irish Waters SEA Scoping Report and consultation process in relation to their 'National Water Resource Plan' (NWRP). It was noted that this is an initial consultation process and there will be further consultations during the year. The closing date for Submissions was in late December but as An Fóram was not in a position to meet at that time, IW had agreed to present at this meeting and receive feedback at the meeting with a follow-up written summary of the issues raised. It was further agreed that a copy of the presentation is to be circulated to the members of An Fóram on Wednesday.</p> <p>Mary and Stephen presented on the Plan and the consultation process and following same, the members of An Fóram made a number of comments and suggestions as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The status of the Eastern and Midlands Water Supply Scheme in the context of the NWRP - it was noted that that project is a standalone project. • Queries with regard to water zones referred to in the presentation and plans to reduce the number of same; • Inclusion of waste water treatment schemes in the plan – it was noted that these schemes are being treated as a different programme and as such are not provided for within the NWRP. • Queries in relation to proposals to utilise grey water for non-drinking water requirements; • A range of conservation issues including the use of rain water harvesting, financial incentives to reduce use; • Queries on Irish Water's input into national policies on water conservation provisions in legislation and regulations e.g. building regulations – also linkages to the National Planning Framework; • Provision in relation to rural areas where there is no current public supply but where population increases are leading to demands for services; • Public education programme in relation to education on water provision costings, conservation requirements and 	<p>Circulate copy of presentation and NWRP to all;</p> <p>Arrange for submission of issues listing to IW;</p> <p>Issue invitation to IW to present at future meeting.</p>

		<p>solutions etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Query in relation to linkages between Irish Water and Local Authorities in terms of planning control and provisions for water conservation etc. <p>Mary and Stephen were thanked for their presentation and it was agreed that a submission will be issued by An Fóram within the next day or so, listing the issues of concern.</p> <p>Following this, the members of An Fóram agreed that the submission would summarise their concerns under the following categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Water Conservation. 2. Public education and awareness programme. 3. Requirements in relation to the planning approval process by Local Authorities. 4. Consultation requirements. 5. Integration of waste water treatment plans with this NWSP. 6. Potential of customised and localised responses in relation to water provision. 7. Overarching water quality issues. 8. The Eastern and Midland Water Supply Project <p>It was further agreed that an invitation would be issued to Irish Water to present to the February meeting in relation to the Eastern and Midland Water Supply Project and at the following meeting in relation to the waste water treatment programme.</p>	
4	<p>Presentation from Dr. Alec Rolston from DKIT in relation to the Staleen Water Outage incident</p>	<p>Following lunch, Dr Collins welcomed Dr. Alec Rolston from DKIT to present on their review of customer engagement by Irish Water during interruptions to the supply of water in the Drogheda and East Meath Region. It was noted that the draft report had been concluded and submitted just before Christmas.</p> <p>Dr. Rolston presented to the members an overview of the customer consultation process including the methodologies, customer groups, timelines and participation/response levels. It was noted that as a long period of time had elapsed between the outage and the commissioning of the report, it was more difficult to actively engage people in the review process. Dr. Rolston then outlined the various responses in terms of where customers received information from, how services were managed, how the needs of vulnerable customers were met, quality management in terms of interim water supplies etc.</p> <p>It was clear that a number of lessons can be learnt for all as a result of the review process.</p> <p>Following the presentation, the members raised a number of</p>	<p>Arrange for circulation of presentation to all; Place as an item on the agenda for the February meeting; Review procurement procedures.</p>

		<p>queries and suggestions for incorporation into the final report. At the end of the discussion, the following actions were agreed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The presentation will be circulated to the members in the next day or so. 2. Dr. Rolston will complete the draft report and incorporate the suggestions received from the members. 3. The final report will be submitted to An Fóram and given further consideration at the February meeting. 4. Following same, An Fóram will agree on the feedback to be given to Irish Water. 5. An Fóram will consider mechanisms in terms of procurement which will facilitate a quicker tendering process if and when further similar reviews/studies are required. 	
5	Presentation on Rivers Trust by Dr. Thomas Harrington.	Dr. Collins thanked Dr. Harrington for preparing a presentation on the Rivers Trust. However, as the number of members in attendance had fallen below the quorum requirement it was agreed, with Tom's consent, to defer this item to the February meeting.	Place as an item on the agenda for the February meeting
6.	AOB	<p>Dr. Collins and Sharon Kennedy advised the meeting with regard to a consultation process by the EPA in relation to the National Inspection Plan for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems – 2018 to 2021. It was noted that the closing date for same is the 26th January and a brief discussion took place with regard to observations to be submitted in relation to same. It was agreed to circulate an information note to all and to request suggestions for inclusion in the submission.</p> <p>Attention was brought to The Rivers Trust Spring Conference (UK & Ireland) which will take place in Dublin on March 21st. Details to be confirmed.</p> <p>Also noted was World Water Day on March 22nd which might be a good date (during that week) to hold the symposium and also to issue some press release from An Fóram.</p>	Issue e-mail to all members with regard to the Consultation Process and seek suggestions for inclusion in response.
7.	Arrangements for next meeting	It was noted that the next meeting of An Fóram will take place on the 22 nd February – venue to be confirmed.	Agreed
		This concluded the business of the meeting	

Signed:



Dr. Tom Collins
Chairperson