

MINUTES OF PUBLIC WATER FORUM MEETING NO. 8

DATE: 25th January 2017
TIME : 11:00 – 16:00
LOCATION : The Spencer Hotel, Dublin

PRESENT:

Dr Tom Collins (Chair), Fergus O'Toole (CER), Aoife Doyle (CER)
 Andrea Ahern, Berenice Phelan, Colm Brady, Connie Rochford, Dympna Morrow, Eoghan Brophy, James Grimes , Joe Tuohy, John Shine, Karen Carney, Keith Hyland, Kevin Ryan, Laurie Kearon , Liam Berney, Michael Brophy, Michael Spellman, Mindy O'Brien, Neil Walker, Orla O'Donovan, Patrick Gerry McGuinness, Paul McMenamin, Rena O'Herlihy, Suzanne Linnane, Tom Horan, Vincent Holmes, William O'Neill.

APOLOGIES:

David Wright, Jean O'Dwyer, Liam Tobin, Philip Treacy, Susan O'Keefe, Tim Fenn

In Attendance:

Item 1.0 – Colm Lavery, Stephen Dineen (DHPCLG)
 Item 2.0 – Sheenagh Rooney, Bríd O'Donovan (CER)

ITEM DETAILS

1.0 Role & Structure of the Forum – Colm Lavery (DHPCLG)

Colm outlined where the Dept perceived the role of the Forum as it is currently and where it could evolve to. The overlap of functions within Government Departments and bodies, the favoured approach at present is to converge all under one umbrella group; the National Water Forum.

It was queried what the overall vision for the Forum is, Colm outlined that it would be to have an enduring Forum across the many sections of water.

The question of staffing for the Forum was raised. Colm advised that it is in hand at present and clarified that it will be a position filled by secondment. Colm committed to updating the Chair on an ongoing basis.

Numerous members gave feedback in favour of a well worded referendum for public ownership of water and associated infrastructure. Colm confirmed that the office of the Attorney General is engaging with the Department already.

The Chair thanked both Colm and Stephen for taking the time to meet and answer queries raised by the members.

ACTION

NOTED

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| 2.0 | <p>CER 2017 Workplan – Sheenagh Rooney (CER)
 Sheenagh provided an outline of the workplan for year. In relation to non-domestic charges, the consultation process was clarified. Irish Water will submit a proposal and the CER will hold a public consultation on the same proposal. CER intend to harmonise tariffs across the country via the consultation as at present it is not.</p> <p>An area of concern raised with Sheenagh was the ability to only download the Irish Water Customer Hand book at present, Sheenagh concurred that it is an area that needed to be examined.</p> | NOTED |
| 4.1 | <p>Apologies</p> | NOTED |
| 4.2 | <p>Approval of Minutes from Meeting No. 7
 Approved.</p> | APPROVED |
| 4.3 | <p>Member Update
 None</p> | NOTED |
| 5.1 | <p>Budget Update
 Noted</p> | NOTED |
| 5.2 | <p>Job Specification Update
 The Chair provided an update from the most recent communications with the Department and he clarified the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Executive appointed will work for the National Water Forum and will be based in a LAWCO office, most likely, Tipperary. - It is envisioned that the nominated person could be in place by 7th March 2017. - The PWF will not be commencing a recruitment campaign. <p>The members expressed concern of having a person appointed without their inclusion, the Chair confirmed that they can vet the appointee. This was questioned by another member of the Forum, in their experience, if it is an appointment within the Department the members will have little if any input.</p> | NOTED |
| 5.3 | <p>Joint Oireachtas Committee Update
 The Chair spoke of what was been asked of the members by the Oireachtas and sought members to attend with him over the various dates in February. Members who are interested in attending are to email the Secretary.</p> | NOTED |
| 6.0 | <p>EU Water Framework Directive
 The discussion indicated that members are keen to gain more knowledge of the Directive and its impact on Ireland. It was agreed to proceed with procurement of Nelly Mau Blanc and to hold a seminar, over a day or two, to have presentations from experts in this area.</p> | AGREED |



An action was undertaken by the Chair, with assistance from Órla O'Donovan and Suzanne Linnane to draft a submission to the Forum to commence procurement of services of the experts in this area.

Date of Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Public Water Forum will be held on: **7th March 2017**

Minutes approved:

Chairperson

Date