

Minutes of the Ninth Meeting of the Coastal and Marine Forum held on Monday 1st December 2008 at 2.00pm in the Countryside Centre, Crawfordsburn Country Park, Helen's Bay.

In Attendance:

Prof. Andrew Cooper, University of Ulster. (Chairman)

Peter Archdale, The Loughs Agency

Maeve Bell, Royal Yachting Association

Gordon Best, Quarry Products Association NI

Ken Bradley, Planning and Natural Resources Division, DOE

Kathryn Callaghan, Countryside Access and Activities Network

Judith Farrell, Northern Ireland Fish Producers Organisation Ltd

Melanie Gomes, Marine Task Force

David Knott, Belfast Harbours Commissioners

Helen Noble, Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust

Campbell Tweed, Ulster Farmer's Union

Alan Hamilton, CMF Officer

Apologies:

John Anderson, Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside

Val Cummins, Coastal and Marine Resources Centre, University College Cork

Phil Davidson, The National Trust

Liam Flanigan, Northern Ireland Local Government Association

Joanne Gaffney, Cross-Border Aquaculture Initiative Team

Dick James, Northern Ireland Fish Producers Organisation Ltd

Alan McCulla, Anglo North Irish Fish Producers Organisation Ltd

Caroline Nolan, Strangford Lough Management Advisory Committee

1. Welcome

1.1. Prof. Cooper welcomed those present to the ninth meeting.

2. Minutes

2.1. The minutes of the meeting of 24th September 2008 were approved as presented.

3. Matters Arising

Item 3.2. Illegal Sand Extraction Ballintoy Harbour

3.1. The CMF Officer informed those present that there was no change since the last update in that Moyle District Council is taking County Court proceedings regarding the Sandy Port, Ballintoy.

- 3.2. In the meantime Members to be kept updated on progress with regard to the situation at Sandy Port.

Action: CMF Officer to keep Members updated on progress with regard to the situation at Sandy Port. [CMF Officer]

Item 3.3. Letter to Coastal Councils

- 3.3. The Chairman said that he had drafted a letter to the various coastal councils outlining the Forums concerns about illegal sand extraction and dumping of waste material on beaches and reiterating Council's duties regarding such matters in those cases where Council's are the custodians of the beaches where such instances occur. The letter will issue shortly.

Item 3.6. Rathlin Island ICZM Project

- 3.4. The CMF Officer informed those present that there was no change since the last update.
- 3.5. Ken Bradley went on to say that the department is working closely with Moyle District Council on the possibility of making a bid for funding the project through the Rural Development Programme Fund. However it is understood that it will be the New Year before any calls for projects will be made.
- 3.6. Members asked id it would be possible for someone from to give the Forum a presentation on the Rural Development Programme Fund. It was agreed that the CMF Officer should contact the appropriate division within DARD and find out if this was possible.
- 3.7. Members to be kept updated of progress.

Action: CMF Officer to keep Members updated on progress. [CMF Officer]

Item 3.9. Data Collection and Storage

- 3.8. The CMF Officer said that Joe Breen, NIEA was in the process of finalising discussions with Andy Bradbury and several other guest speakers on the possibility of setting up a 1 – 11/2 day workshop. It is hoped that the event will take place at the end January beginning February 2009. The CMF Officer hoped to be in a position to provide further details shortly.
- 3.9. Members asked to be consulted on the timing of the event before setting firm date(s).
- 3.10. CMF Officer would keep Members updated on progress.

Action: CMF Officer to keep Members updated on progress. [CMF Officer]

Item 3.10. PPS 20 – The Coast

- 3.11. The Chairman apologised for not being able to take any action over the with regard to drafting a letter to the Minister outlining the Forum's concerns about PPS 20. He confirmed that he was in the process for finalising the letter and as agreed he would circulate the draft to Members for comments prior to issuing it.

Action: Chairman to send Members copy of draft letter to the Minister for comment prior to issuing it. [Chairman]

Item 3.11. Geo-science Trail

- 3.12. Gordon best reported that the Geo-science Trail Sub Group had met in the morning. He went on to say that it was evident from the various presentations given to the Group that there is a vast amount of information, publications, guides and data available already and that there was good work ongoing in the field of Geotourism and Geoparks. There is a very good marketable product that is waiting to be harnessed for both local and interest groups.

- 3.13. Gordon said that the outcome of the meeting was that, subject to the agreement of the Forum, Prof. Cooper should write to both the Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and the Minister of Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment highlighting what a valuable asset we have, recommending the need to provide a Central Information Hub and pointing out that the Forum will be producing a position paper on the topic the finding from which will be copied to the Minister.

- 3.14. Members agreed that the Chairman should write to the CEO of NITB and to Minister Foster.

Action: Chairman to write to CEO of NITB and Minister Foster. [Chairman]

- 3.15. In the meantime a small sub group should be set up to take forward the preparation of the Geo Science Trail Position Paper.

Action: CMF Officer to keep Members updated on progress. [CMF Officer]

Item 3.12. Strangford Lough Management Committee/ NICMF Conference

- 3.16. The Chairman reported that 'The Coast Are we Managing?' conference was held on the 27th November and was well attended with around 100 delegates. Early feedback has been very positive with calls for similar type events to be held in the future. A conference report and CD will be sent to delegates in due course.

Item 6.12. Tourism Representation on NICMF

- 3.17. The Chairman said that he has just finalised his letter to Mr Kennedy outlining the Forum's decision on Tourism representation on the Forum and he would issue it shortly.

Action: Chairman to issue letter to Mr Kennedy outlining Forum's decision on Tourism representation on Forum. [Chairman]

Item 7.5. Coastal Councils ICZM Awareness Raising Road Show

- 3.18. Following discussion members agreed that it would be the Forum's interest to take this forward as soon as possible in order to help raise the Forum's profile while at the same time raising the awareness of ICZM at local council level. Members also agreed that some sort of road show aimed at councillors and council officials in the new council areas could be the best way forward. A short debate ensued on the number of events that should take place such as all 7 new council areas or just 2 or 3 events strategically held around the coast. It was finally agreed that the Chairman would contact Liam Flanigan, who because of another appointment could not be present, and seek his views on best to engage with the relevant councils.

Action: Chairman to contact Liam Flanigan to discuss the idea of a Coastal Councils ICZM Awareness Raising Road show and how best to engage with the relevant Councils. [Chairman]

4. NICMF 1st Report to Government – November 2009.

- 4.1. The Chairman explained that the Forum's 1st Report to Government was due by November 2009 and it was the Forum's responsibility to prepare the report. The CMF Officer will only be able to assist in the printing and distribution of the Final Report.
- 4.2. Following discussion Members were agreed that a short 'punchy' report highlighting those areas where progress against targets is of concern but also recognising areas of achievement. In order that the Forum can comment on such matters it was agreed that the CMF Officer would request an update on progress on targets from Departments as at the end of March 2009 and not at the end of December 2008 as agreed at a previous meeting.
- 4.3. In the meantime the Chairman agreed to prepare a framework document and circulate it to Members for comment. It was also suggested that, as happens with the Northern Ireland Biodiversity Group, a small group should be set up to help draft various chapters of the report. This was accepted.

Action: CMF Officer to seek update from Departments on progress on targets as at the end of March 2009. [CMF Officer]

Chairman to prepare a framework document and circulate it to Members for comment. [Chairman]

5. Any other Business

Shellfish Water Directive Consultation

- 5.1. Peter Archdale alerted Members to the fact that the Department of the Environment has published a consultation paper entitled Proposals for additional designations under the Shellfish Waters Directive. The consultation paper seeks to implement the Directive and the transposing legislation The Surface waters (Shellfish) (Classification) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997, the purpose of which are to protect and improve the quality of coastal and brackish waters in order to support shellfish life and growth and contribute to the quality of edible shellfish product.
- 5.2. The consultation period ends on 6th February 2009.
- 5.3. The CMF Officer said he would email Members the link to the Shellfish Water Directive consultation paper to the Shellfish Water Directive consultation paper.

Action: CMF Officer to email Members link to the Shellfish Water Directive consultation paper.

National Association of Areas of Natural Outstanding Beauty [NAANOB] Conference 2009.

- 5.4. Helen Noble drew Members attention to the NAAONB's 11th Annual Conference entitled "Valuing the Environment" which is scheduled to take place at the University of Ulster, Coleraine on the 7th – 9th July 2009.
- 5.5. Helen agreed to forward further details of the event to the CMF Officer for onward transmission to Members.

Action: Helen Noble to forward further details of the “Valuing the Environment” conference to the CMF Officer for onward transmission to Members. [Helen Noble/CMF Officer]

Marine Bill

- 5.6. Members asked if it would be possible to receive a presentation on the proposals for a Northern Ireland Marine Bill.
- 5.7. Ken Bradley advised Members was perhaps slightly premature for such a presentation to take place at the February meeting. However he agreed to consult with colleagues and find out if such a presentation could take place at the June meeting and report back at the February meeting.

Action: Ken Bradley to provide update on a NI Marine Bill presentation at February meeting. [Ken Bradley]

Foyle Area (Control of Fishing) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 consultation

5.8. Peter Archdale informed Members that the Loughs Agency is currently consulting on proposed amendments of the Foyle Area (Control of Fishing) Regulations 1999 a copy of which can be accessed on the Loughs Agency web site www.loughs-agency.org.

5.9. The consultation period ends on 13th February 2009,

Royal Yachting Association/ PWCP Forum

5.10. Maeve Bell advised Members that a Personal Watercraft Partnership [PWCP] Forum is being arranged to take place in early 2009. More details will follow when available.

Belfast Tall Ships 2009

5.11. David Knott advised Members that Belfast has been selected as the finishing port of the Tall Ships Atlantic Challenge 2009. The event will take place from Thursday, 13th to Sunday, 16th August 2009. It will be one of the most important events in Belfast during 2009. More details are available on the Belfast City Council web site www.belfastcity.gov.uk/tallships/

6. Date/Venue of next meeting.

6.1. Date of next meeting Wednesday, 25th February 2009 – Venue/time to be confirmed.

Action: To confirm venue/time of February 2009 meeting of the Forum. [CMF Officer]

Alan Hamilton

December 2008