

Minutes of the Sixth Meeting of the Coastal and Marine Forum held on Tuesday 11th March 2008 at 2.00pm in the Conference Centre, Cornmill Quay, Marine Park, Annalong.

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
Jonathan Buick, Action Renewables
Cllr. William Burns, Mourne Heritage Trust
Judith Farrell, Northern Ireland Fish Producers Organisation Ltd
Melanie Gomes, Marine Task Force
David Knott, Belfast Harbours Commissioners
Delphine Pouligny, Cross-Border Aquaculture Initiative Team

Alan Hamilton, CMF Officer

Apologies:

John Anderson, Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside
Judith Annett, Countryside Consultancy
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
Helen Noble, Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust
Campbell Tweed, Ulster Farmer's Union

In Attendance:

Matthew Bushby, Countryside Services Manager
Catherine Bertrand, Natural Heritage Outreach Officer
Members of Mourne Heritage Trust Board of Trustees

1. Welcome

1.1. Prof. Cooper welcomed those present to the 6th meeting of the Forum. A special welcome was expressed to members of the Board of Trustees of Mourne Heritage Trust and to Matthew Bushby and Katherine Bertrand from Mourne Heritage Trust who would be giving a presentation to the Forum later on.

1.2. He went on to thank Mourne Heritage Trust for offering the use of the Cornmill Quay Conference Centre for the meeting and the kind hospitality the members received.

2. Presentation: Mourne Heritage Trust – Matthew Bushby, Countryside Services Manager and Katherine Bertrand, Natural Heritage Outreach Officer, Mourne Heritage Trust

- 2.1. Matthew Bushby thanked the Chairman for his kind welcome and then gave a short but very interesting and in depth account about history about the trust outlining their work within the Mourne AONB with particular reference to upcoming coastal and marine initiatives.
- 2.2. Matthew Bushby, explained the remit of the trust as to caring for the AONB and explained some of the issues involved in carrying out this work.
- 2.3. Catherine Bertrand, the newly appointed Natural Heritage Outreach Officer, gave a short guided tour of the Mourne coastline explaining some of the habitats and species found along it, and outlined various international, national and local events such as World Oceans Day, Beach watch and MHT run walks and training on the coast.
- 2.4. This was followed by a short brainstorming session where Jo Whatmough and Isobel Hood of the MHT board outlined some of the key pressures on the Mourne coast such as access, dumping and extraction.

3. Minutes

- 3.1. The minutes of the meeting of 14th November 2007 were approved as presented.

4. Matters Arising

Item 4.10. Coastal Development Position Paper

- 4.1. The Chairman confirmed that as agreed at the November meeting he had written to Planning Service seeking an update on progress on PPS20 – The Coast and had received a reply from Mr Paul Priestly, Permanent Secretary, Department for Regional Development (DRD). The Chairman then read the content of Mr Priestly's letter to the members. The letter concluded that "agreement had reached between the Minister for Regional Development and the Minister of the Environment that all Planning Policies being prepared by this department (DRD) should be transferred to the Department of the Environment. This includes Planning Policy Statement 20. No date has yet been agreed for this transfer of responsibility to take place."
- 4.2. After discussion it was agreed that, due to the lack of progress in the development of PPS 20 and concerns that it now appears that it will slip further now responsibility for taking it forward is being moved to another department, the Chairman should seek clarification about the future of PPS 20 at the WFD Inter Departmental Board meeting in April.

Action: Chairman to seek clarification on future of PPS20 at WFD Inter Departmental Board meeting in April. [Chairman]

Item 4.11 Illegal Sand Extraction Ballintoy Harbour

4.3. Gordon Best, Quarry Products Association said he was concerned that according to the November minutes “Planning Service has been in contact with Moyle District Council and Council Officers are considering methods of blocking access down to the beach.” and wondered if Planning Service had actually issued a “Stop Notice” on Moyle Council. He was also frustrated about the level of enforcement in such cases as within his industry quarry owners had to pay a levy on any aggregate extracted. These people were getting it free! It was agreed that the CMF Officer should contact Planning Service to clarify what type of action has been taken with regard to the illegal sand extraction at Ballintoy Harbour.

Action: CMF Officer to contact Planning Service to clarify what type of action has been taken with regard to the illegal sand extraction at Ballintoy Harbour. [CMF Officer]

Item 4.19. Rathlin Island ICZM Project

4.4. Ken Bradley gave a brief update regarding the Rathlin Island project advising those present that he had attended a meeting only yesterday (Monday 10th March) with Moyle District Council, a representative from Rathlin Development Community Association and Prof. Cooper at which the way ahead with regard to the Rathlin Island ICZM Project was discussed. Ken explained that following a meeting on 11th December 2007 with colleagues from DRD DARD EHS and North East Regional Partnership under the Chairmanship of Howard Keery, Special EU Programme Body to discuss possible Interreg IV projects for Rathlin Island it became apparent that match funding may not be required this year as it is unlikely any Interreg IV projects would be agreed on time. During that meeting it became apparent that another possible route open would be through the new Rural Development Programme and in particular funding made available to Local Action Groups. Hence the meeting with Moyle Council.

4.5. Ken went on to say that Moyle District Council has agreed to take the lead in seeking funding under the Rural Development Programme, with match funding being provided by the Department of the Environment and any other donations that may be forthcoming from other organisations with an interest in the island. The first stage of the project will be the employment of an officer. Moyle District Council is now in the process of drafting a job description which will be circulated for comment. Ken Bradley added that if this materialised he would be willing to fund up to £25,000 for such a project.

4.6. In the meantime the Chairman said that there was a possibility of a French student undertaking some ICZM related work such as the possibility of

creating a coastal footpath on Rathlin Island. However details were yet to be finalised.

4.7. Members to be kept updated of progress.

Action: CMF Officer to keep Members updated on progress on ICZM Rathlin Island Project.

Item 4.25. NICMF Maritime Archaeology leaflet

4.8. The Chairman circulated a draft copy of the Maritime Leaflet and asked if members could forward any comments to the Coastal Forum Officer as soon as possible. The CMF Officer agreed to send an electronic copy of the leaflet to all the members.

Action: Electronic version of the draft Maritime Leaflet to be sent to all Members for comment. [CMF Officer]

Item 4.28 Data Collection and Storage

4.9. The CMF Officer said that Joe Breen had confirmed that he had made approaches within EHS to find out if they had the capacity to take forward a scoping exercise and was still awaiting feedback.

4.10. CMF Officer would keep Members updated on progress.

Action: CMF Officer to keep Members updated on progress on Data Collection and Storage Scoping exercise.

Item 6.1. The Management of Marine Habitats

4.11. The CMF Officer confirmed that Maeve Rafferty's presentation on 'The Management of Marine Habitats' would take place at the June meeting.

5. Outcome of 11 January Workshop.

5.1. The Chairman thanked those Members who were available to attend the Workshop and reported that it had been a productive day. He went on to say that in addition to the Forum's number one priority, the 'Monitoring of the ICZM Strategy Objectives' other priorities highlighted included the first progress report which is due in November 2009 and the need to raise awareness of ICZM and coastal issues.

5.2. Following a short discussion it was agreed that with regard to raising awareness of ICZM and coastal issues it may perhaps, as a first step, be of some benefit to engage with coastal MLAs as well as local government. It was pointed out that in England there is an 'All Party Parliamentary Group on Coastal and Marine Issues' which was set up by Coastnet and that the

CMF Officer could perhaps investigate the possibility of setting a similar group in Northern Ireland and report back findings at the next meeting .

Action: CMF Officer to investigate the possibility of setting up an ‘All Party Assembly Group on Coastal and Marine Issues’ and report back findings at the next meeting .

6. Monitoring of ICZM Strategy – Members top priorities.

6.1. By way of information the CMF Officer provided the following information:

Total Number of Objectives: 48
Number of Key Mechanisms: 92

Completed actions: 8 ~ 8%

Not yet started: 15 ~ 16%

Ongoing: 69 ~ 75%

6.2. Following discussion it was the opinion of those present that a further meeting of the Forum should be arranged dedicated to discussing the Monitoring of Strategy Objectives.

6.3. As an initial step it was also agreed that it would be of some benefit if Forum Members could highlight their **top priorities (3-4)** in each of the 4 Strategy’s Priority Areas i.e. Social/Cultural; Environment; Economy; and Integration. Some examples those present put forward were : SC 1.2; ENV 1.2; ENV 1.5; ECON 1.1; ECON 1.2; ECON 2.2; ECON 3.3 and INT 1.1.

6.4. The CMF Officer agreed to contact Members.

Action: CMF Officer to contact Members and ask if they could highlight their top priorities (3-4) in each of the 4 Strategy’s Priority Areas i.e. Social/Cultural; Environment; Economy; and Integration. Following receipt of responses he will arrange meeting of the Forum dedicated to discussing ‘Monitoring of Strategy Objectives’ [CMF Officer]

7. WFD Board – NICMF progress report items.

7.1. As previously discussed at Item 4.2. Chairman to seek clarification about the future of PPS 20 at the WFD Inter Departmental Board meeting in April.

Action: Chairman to seek clarification on future of PPS20 at WFD Inter Departmental Board meeting in April. [Chairman]

8. NICMF Conference

8.1. The Chairman reminded Members of the Forum Conference 'Planning Challenges and Opportunities for Irelands Coast' being held in the City Hotel, Londonderry on 10th and 11th April 2008 and hoped that there would be a good attendance from Members.

8.2. Members were circulated a copy of the conference programme.

9. NICMF Web Site

9.1. The CMF Officer reported that since the web site went 'live' at the beginning of January 2008 there were 134 'hits' for that month. He pointed out that the more 'hits' on there are on the site this will help raise its profile within search engines such as Google. He pointed out that this was crucial as Information Systems Unit, who development the site for the Forum audit the site on a regular basis to determine if is worth being kept active.

9.2. The CMF Officer also encouraged Members to provide him with regular updates for the site such as News Items as at present the only 'News Items' that appear are those from government departments. As previously discussed at Item 4.2. Chairman to seek clarification about the future of PPS 20 at the WFD Inter Departmental Board meeting in April.

Action: Members to provide CMF Officer with regular updates for the Forum web site. [All Members]

10. Any other Business

Mussel Dredging Carlingford Lough – Web Site enquiry

10.1. Members were circulated a copy of a web site enquiry from Mr Conor McGuinness, Kilbroney Park Preservation Society, 15 Bridge St, Rostrevor, Co Down. The Society's membership has grave concerns in regard to the seemingly uncontrolled bottom dredging of Carlingford Lough by an ever-increasing volume of mussel fishing vessels.

10.2. Following discussion Members felt that there was insufficient detail to discuss the matter in depth. In the circumstances therefore it was agreed that the CMF Officer should contact Mr McGuinness asking if the Society could provide such details as the specific location(s) where the mussel fishing is taking place, the frequency of the activity and the type of vessels involved.

Action: CMF Officer to contact Mr McGuinness asking if the Society could provide such details as the specific location(s) where the mussel fishing is taking place, the frequency of the activity and the type of vessels involved. [CMF Officer]

10.3. Peter Archdale said that with regard to draft PPS 18 – Renewable Energy, while he was aware that offshore renewable energy development is not governed by the land use planning system and notes that the Supplementary Guidance makes frequent mention to the potential visual

impact of offshore wind farms. He also understands that the Department of Enterprise , Trade and Investment (DETI) such installations. is the licensing authority . He went on to say that he had asked the CMF Officer to seek clarification on how DETI weighs up the conflicting (ICZM) issues in approving

10.4. The CMF Officer confirmed that as yet he had received no formal response from DETI, however he did have a response from DETI to a similar query which was as follows:

"Planning Service would retain responsibility for consents in relation to any onshore developments associated with offshore renewable developments e.g. erection of substations etc. The key consents required for the offshore element would be

- (a) a licence from DoE Environment & Heritage Service under the Food and Environmental protection Act ('FEPA Licence')
- (b) a lease or licence from the Crown Estate to operate on the seabed; and
- (c) DETI consent under Article 39 of the Electricity (Northern Ireland) Order 1992 for the construction of a generating station."

10.5. Peter said that his main concern was that there appears to be a gap were the impact of what offshore development looks like above sea level is not taken into consideration in any regulations or legislation.

10.6. Ken Bradley thought this could be addressed under the forthcoming Marine Bill and in particular the Marine Spatial Planning aspect of the Bill.

11. Dates/Venues of next Meetings.

11.1. The following dates were confirmed:

Wednesday, 25th June 2008 – Venue University of Ulster, Coleraine; time to be confirmed.

Wednesday, 24th September 2008 - time and venue to be confirmed.

Action: To confirm time of June meeting of the Forum. [CMF Officer]

Alan Hamilton

March 2008

