

**N.I. WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE STAKEHOLDER FORUM**  
**1<sup>ST</sup> Floor Conference Room**  
**Calvert House, Belfast**  
**Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2009**

**2:00pm**

**[DRAFT] MINUTES**

**Attendees**

Uel Irwin	AES Kilroot
John Martin	Freshwater Task Force (RSPB)
Liz Loughran	DOE PEPG
Gabriel Nelson	DOE NIEA
Philip McMurray	DOE PEPG
Aileen Lawson	Ulster Farmers Union
Linda McGoldrick	DARD Environmental Policy
Siobhan Bowers	DARD Environmental Policy
David Knott	Port of Belfast
Jim Hayes	DCAL
Robbie Marshall	UAF
Sean Convery	FWAG
Brenda Cunning	DOE PEPG
Emma Neill	DOE PEPG

**Apologies**

Julian Smyth	DRD Water Policy
Joanne Gaffney	Aquaculture Initiative
Claire Cockerill	Freshwater Task Force (WWF)
Tim Cowan	DCAL
Gordon Best	Quarry Products Association
Michael Bell	NI Food & Drink Association
Brian Ervine	DARD Environmental Policy
Peter Archdale	CNCC

**1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Philip McMurray (PMcM) welcomed everyone to the meeting and detailed the apologies. He explained that, from the next meeting, NIEA will be responsible for chairing the stakeholder forum meetings, but these will still take place in Calvert House in Belfast. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

**2. Matters Arising from Minutes and Updates Paper**

There was one matter arising: David Knott (DK) stated that he was having problems accessing the consultation responses online. Gabriel Nelson (GN) explained that this may be if he was using Adobe 8 to access an Adobe 9 document and that this issue had been raised internally for correction.

### **3. Marine Policy and Legislation Overview**

Brenda Cunning (BC) gave a short presentation to the group about marine policy. She explained that there are 3 teams within Planning and Environmental Policy Group (PEPG) working on marine issues – the 3 main areas are marine planning, licensing and nature conservation.

The Marine and Coastal Access Act received royal assent in November 2009. The Northern Ireland Marine Bill is also in progress and, in addition, the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) must be transposed by July 2010 – this will be through a set of UK-wide Regulations. There is an overlap between WFD and MSFD in terms of coastal waters, and in terms of the process, which is cyclical and involves monitoring programmes and programmes of measures to reach good environmental status by 2020. In respect of marine planning, work is underway to develop a UK wide policy statement, taking account of high-level common themes. Beneath that, marine plans are due to be developed in 2013/2014.

Food and Environment Protection Act licensing will be replaced by marine licensing under the UK wide Act. The 2 main differences are the introduction of civil sanctions and appeals provisions.

In terms of marine nature conservation, the UK has an ongoing commitment to protect existing designated areas and possibly new marine protected zones by 2012.

BC explained that there will be a lot of opportunities to participate in public consultation regarding marine issues over the next year. The consultation on MSFD closes on 22 January 2010 and public consultations on marine planning, marine licensing and the NI Marine Bill will be published later in 2010.

John Martin (JM) enquired about the creation of a Marine Management Organisation. BC explained that this will be examined under the development of the NI Marine Bill.

### **4. First River Basin Management Plans**

GN updated that the consultation response document on the draft RBMPs had been published on 30 October and that NI Executive approval had been granted on 5 November to the publishing of the 2009-2015 plans by 22 December 09. The NIEA Website will give access to the summary plans, supporting documents and Local Management Area information

leaflets. The plans will be launched on 21 January 2010. Although other parts of the UK are not producing any hard copies, NIEA will make hard copies of the summary plans available in January. GN explained that, due to the delay with the ROI parts of the plans, the “Tier 1” document which details North South co-operation will not be published until March 2010.

JM enquired about the linkage of plans with those in ROI. GN explained that, whilst the work on plans in ROI will be completed before 22 December, the plans must be approved at a local council level after that. He also updated on the level of ambition in ROI and NI – ROI are aiming for 75% good status by 2015 from a baseline of 45%. In NI, the baseline is 25%, with an aim of 64% at good status by 2015.

Robbie Marshall (RM) queried what information would be available on the Website. GN clarified that the format of information available will remain the same as the draft plans, with a summary document, supporting documents and interactive web maps. Local Management Area (LMA) information sheets will also be available. The Programme of Measures will be further broken down from RBD level within the LMA information sheets. GN also explained that the next round of CSG meetings would be an opportunity for more engagement regarding the LMAs.

JM indicated that an inventory of communication may be helpful for NIEA to discover any potential gaps. Séan Convery (SC) supported the proposal that efforts to communicate should be carried out at a local level.

Uel Irwin (UI) enquired as to whether monitoring in a river could be carried out at a particular point where there is a greater likelihood of fish being present, citing a specific small river near Kilroot where the last part is pipe. GN stated that, whilst he was not familiar with this particular river, WFD covers all water bodies. RM responded that the process should identify impossible barriers to fish. Jim Hayes (JH) noted that it is important to consider at a local level – if the recruitment is poor whilst the habitat is good, this would be further investigated.

## **5. Update on the Catchment Stakeholder Groups**

GN updated that the last round of CSG meetings ended on 25 November. The meetings included an update regarding pollution and other local issues. They also incorporated a presentation of the LMA process which was quite well received.

GN acknowledged that members have begun to disengage in some catchment areas, perhaps because the plans had been draft whereas from the next meetings the plans will be in place. He noted that at each meeting, a presentation of recent action taken regarding pollution and resulting prosecutions is provided. RM stated that the prosecution process is not robust enough.

## **6. Update on the Local Management Area Plans**

GN explained that there are 26 LMA plans, 9 LMA plans will be carried out in 2010, 9 in 2011 and 8 in 2012. The LMA Information Leaflets consist of some 9 pages including water body status and the associated objectives. GN agreed to circulate the prioritisation paper for these plans.

#### Action

- GN to circulate prioritisation paper for LMA plans.

### **7. Discussion on the Terms of Reference of the Stakeholder Forum**

PMcM noted that some responses had been received regarding the formulation of a revised Terms of Reference for the Stakeholder Forum and invited further feedback.

Aileen Lawson (AL) fed back that it was important to deal with “overarching” or higher level issues at the forum, rather than the “specific” issues which are dealt with through the Catchment Stakeholder Groups. GN noted that if an issue is raised across CSGs, it becomes a national issue – this can then be fed into the IWG. DK observed that the forum is also more sector-specific, whereas the CSGs deal with local issues. RM added that the process needs to be more transparent. JM stated that issues from this group should be fed into the IWG and that the forum should have a role in helping to deliver plans, and that these points should be reflected in the terms of reference. PMcM added that as this is a cyclical process, monitoring should be part of the terms. SC agreed, stating that the forum should be responsible for prioritising issues. DK added that once the programme of measures is in place it will be possible to monitor the progress of these measures, with an independent view. JH noted that successful delivery can lead to more effective access to funding. GN affirmed that funding matters are for the Ministers and the Executive – it is important however to highlight the benefits, noting that the pressure on the public sector will increase. GN stated that the forum should involve promoting and facilitating partnerships to ensure implementation. JM agreed that the issue of partnership is important. JH added that the forum is also an arena for disseminating information. RM considered that it is important to be able to feed in at a strategic level.

It was agreed that PEPG would draft a revised Terms of Reference and circulate for discussion at the next meeting.

In addition, RM noted that the JNCC (Joint Nature Conservation Committee) are currently revising their guidelines in line with WFD, stating that they liaise with SEPA and NIEA. RM questioned whether NIEA were attempting to manipulate these guidelines. GN assured that he would refer this issue to those in NIEA dealing with this, stating that perhaps a NIEA representative could attend the Stakeholder Forum to provide more detail.

### Action

- PEPG to draft revised TOR and circulate

### **8. A.O.B. and Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will take place on 13 April 2010 at 2:00pm in Calvert House, Belfast.