

Lower Foyle Catchment Stakeholder Group

Minutes

Wednesday 4 Nov 2009

Venue: Roe Valley Country Park, Limavady

Attendees:

Norman Henderson (Chairman)
Joanne Livingstone (Catchment Officer)
Alan Warwick (SWQI)
Michael McAlary (NI Water)
Angela Torrens (NI Water)
John Curran (NI Water)
Marcus Austin (NH)
Simon Gummer (WQI)
Bridgeen Magorrian (NIEA)
Conrad McCormick (NIEA)
William Ross
John Mc Cartney (Loughs Agency)
Gareth Greer (Rivers Agency)
Alan Morrow (DARD)
Robert McCloy (UFU)
Caroline Steele (NIEA)
Patrick Casement (CNCC)
Eamon Mullon (Roe Anglers)
Thomas Simpson (Roe Anglers)
Hugh Hastings (Strathfoyle Community Group)

Apologies

Rachel Brown (planning Service)
Stuart Freeman (Planning Service)
Julie Corry (Biodiversity Officer)
Dympha Gallagher (NI Water)
Colin Kennedy (Derry CC)
Art Nivan (Loughs Agency)
Martin Kerr (EPA)
Deaglan McBride (Road Service)

1. Welcome and Introduction

Norman Henderson welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited all present to introduce themselves. The action points from the last meeting held on 23 April 2009 were circulated and the points addressed.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

These were agreed to be an accurate account and are available on NIEA website on the following link:

3. Matters arising

Table 1: Summary of the action points from the meeting.

Ref	Action Point	Action	Update
AP1	1	JL to give an update on progress at Carmoney WWT	<p>Since the last meeting in April another set of samples have been collected and the results from both sets of samples show insignificant levels of acrylamide and aluminium, so the discharge is not toxic. However it does cause an aesthetic issue.</p> <p>NI Water has confirmed that the upgrade will not include funding to work on the discharge point but the upgrade will lead to less discharge from the site. The upgrade is due to be completed in 18 months. NI Water have requested that all complaints about the discharge are passed directly to them as this will strengthen any bid for resources in future.</p> <p>AP 1: In future any plume/cloudy discharge noted should be photographed and the details passed to JL who will pass them to NI Water.</p>
AP 3	2	JL to ensure the Nitrates Directive is a standing agenda item	<p>JL reported that cross compliances visits were underway for 2009 and a full update would be available at the next meeting.</p> <p>AP 2: JL to provide an update on x-compliance visits for 2009 at the next meeting.</p>
AP 4	3	JL to invite someone from IPPC to give a presentation at the next meeting.	<p>It was agreed someone from IPPC would be requested to attend if an issue arose on a specific IPPC issue or IPPC site.</p>
AP 5	4	NH to provide update on progress from river bailiffs to samples for pollution investigations.	<p>NH reported that progress was being made in this area after a meeting with the UAF, the UAF had nominated two angling club bailiffs which would pilot this proposal.</p> <p>AP 3: NH to provide update on progress at the next meeting.</p>

AP 6	5	Noel Bell to provide update on the NIEA proposed restoration of the hydroelectric scheme at Roe Valley Country Park.	<p>Noel Bell provided a 4 page update which was tabled and discussed. There were complaints that the Roe Anglers had not received feedback from the previous meetings and they had not been made aware of the Planning Application being submitted. It was explained that the UAF had submitted a written response to Planning Service and that the Plans were available for Public Viewing in the Roe Valley Country Park and that it was not too late to submit a response. The anglers have asked for further discussion on this proposal.</p> <p>AP 4: JL to ask Noel Bell to meet the Roe Anglers again or to invite them to any future Meetings or Forums where they would have the opportunity to discuss the proposal further.</p>
------	---	--	---

Questions and discussion

The issue of sullage water was raised by Loughs Agency. There is a very significant issue with regard to misconnections in the West Bank in Derry~Londonderry. It was noted that pigeon lofts, car washing, disabled toilets and domestic sewage discharge direct to storm drains are all contributing to the problem. It was agreed that this is a major issue impacting in many different areas of the country and a difficult issue to resolve especially in the current economic climate. It was agreed that education is needed and an assessment of priorities and resources.

4. Alan Warwick (AW) - Regional update on pollution incidents and investigations in the Lower Foyle catchment.

AW gave presentation on the local water management issues and activities of water Quality staff since the last meeting in April. AW detailed the number and severity of pollution incidents. Numbers of pollution incidents from agriculture and NI Water had increased. The presentation is available on the link below: www.ni-environment.gov.uk/water/WFD/public_partic/catchment_stakeholder_groups_maps.htm

Concern was expressed that agriculture and NI water incidents had increased. It was explained that the NI Water cases had increased because more of the smaller works were now being inspected so we should expect to see an increase here. The Small Works are also being prioritised for upgrade.

Concern was expressed about the low fines imposed on farmers when prosecuted for causing pollution. It was explained that this fine is only the tip of the ice-berg as it could also result in the loss of a percentage of single farm payment. Problems on farms include the extreme wet weather experienced this year leading to excessive storm water. Need good management and education.

It was suggested that Planning Service should control development where appropriate waste treatment is not available and NI Water explained that this is the case in some areas in the West where planning has been turned down.

5. Caroline Steele (CS) – Presentation on the way forward for implementation of draft River Basin Management Plan through the development of Local Management Area Plans.

CS tabled a paper on the development of Local Management Area Plans (LMA) to allow local engagement in the implementation of the River Basin Management Plan. The paper and the presentation is available at the link below.

www.ni-environment.gov.uk/water/WFD/public_partic/catchment_stakeholder_groups_maps.htm

CS explained that the River Basin Management Plans would be implemented through the joint development of Local Management Area action plans. The Lower Foyle catchment is split into 3 LMAs:

- Burndennet & Foyle
- Roe
- Faughan

Each of these LMAs will be subject to the development of a local action plan with input from Stakeholders in the Catchment. This proposal was welcomed by the group.

It was asked what new resources and funding would be available to carry out any improvement works identified and it was explained that under the current economic climate funding was unknown. Funding proposals have been submitted to appropriate funders but the success of any financial bids was currently unknown.

6. Close

NH thanked everyone for attending and for their input.

Northern Ireland **Environment** Agency
Water Management Unit
17 Antrim Road
Lisburn
BT28 3AL

Tel: 028 92633499
Email: info@doeni.gov.uk

www.ni-environment.gov.uk