

Upper Foyle Catchment Stakeholder Group

Minutes

Wednesday 11 November 2008

Venue: The Grange, Omagh DC Offices, Mountjoy Road, Omagh

Present:

Peter Archdale (Chairman)
Joanne Livingstone (North West Catchment Officer)
Deirdre Spillane (SWQI, Omagh)
Tom Adamson (NIEA, Water Utility Regulation Group)
Angela Halpenny (NI Water)
Michael McAlary (NI Water)
Brian Montague (NIEA)
Stephen Annesley (WQI, Omagh)
Gavin Turner (WQI, Omagh)
Sam McCracken (WQI, Omagh)
Robbie Marshall (Ulster Angling Federation)
Julie Corry (Biodiversity Officer)
Norman Henderson (NIEA, Regional Operations)
John Mc Cartney (Loughs Agency)
Gareth Greer (Conservation Officer, Rivers Agency)
Bobby Rogers (Omagh Anglers)
Harry Johnston (Trout Farm)
Alan Morrow (DARD)
Alvin Wilson (NIEA)
Conor Loughrey (Roads Service)
Seamus Cullinan (Loughs Agency)
Robert Scott (Abercorn estate)
Matthew Stuart (Abercorn estates))
Ian Irwin (Forest Service)
Art Niven (Loughs Agency)
John Kane (DCAL, Inland Fisheries)
Brian Johnston (Trout Farm)
Ivan Mc Vey (Farmer)
Cllr. Bert Wilson (Omagh DC)
Michael McBride (Farmer)

Apologies

Basil Lenaghan (Forest Service)
Cllr Sean Clarke (Cookstown DC)

1. Welcome and Introduction

Peter Archdale (PA) opened the meeting as chairman and welcomed everyone.

2. Minutes and matters arising from previous meeting

These were agreed to be an accurate account and are available on NIEA website on the following link: ¹

http://www.ni-environment.gov.uk/water/wfd/public_partic/catchment_stakeholder_groups.htm

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

Ref	Action Point	Action	Update
3	1	Peter Archdale and Joanne Livingstone to review the TOR and circulate to members prior to next meeting.	Completed and agreed.
3	2	Joanne Livingstone to ensure Roads Service are invited to next meeting	Road Service thanked for attendance.
4.3	3	Michael McAlary to give a presentation to the group giving details of NI Water's priorities in the catchment area.	NIW presentation to follow.
5.4	4	Joanne Livingstone to circulate the draft RBMP to the group as soon as it becomes available.	Alvin Wilson to give a presentation on the draft RBMPs.
6.2	5	Omagh Anglers to encourage members to use the EHS hotline to report pollution incidents - 0800 80 70 60.	On-going.
6.2	6	Alan Morrow to give an update at the next meeting on the new CMS with regard to water quality options and an update on the rational for variations in the closed period in Northern Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales.	This item to be carried over to next meeting.
6.2	7	Mark Livingstone to provide an update on the Nitrates Effectiveness Programme at the next meeting.	This item to be carried over to a future meeting.
8	8	Joanne Livingstone to invite someone from IPPC and Waste and Contaminated land Unit to the next meeting to give a presentation on their role as industrial regulators.	This item to be carried over to a future meeting.
8	9	Joanne Livingstone to send copies of the presentations to Omagh Anglers and Planning Service.	Completed
8	10	All to forward details of projects on the 'PAIR' form to Joanne.	Completed

¹ If you require a hard copy of the minutes or any of the presentations please contact Joanne Livingstone – 028 9262 3248

3. Deirdre Spillane (DS) - Regional update on pollution incidents and investigations in Upper Foyle catchment.

DS gave presentation on the local water management issues and activities of Water Quality staff since the last meeting in April. DS detailed the number and severity of pollution incidents and the routine river monitoring sites and numbers of Domestic Consent applications processed were also presented. The presentation is available on the link below:

http://www.ni-environment.gov.uk/water/wfd/public_partic/catchment_stakeholder_groups.htm

3.1 Robbie Marshall (RM) raised the domestic consenting process. DS explained procedures of field staff and the role of Building Control in ensuring compliance.

3.2 Cllr. Bert Wilson highlighted farmers concerns at delays in planning approval for new slurry tanks. AM acknowledged this adding any time extension to the Nitrate Directive was controlled by the EU.

3.3 The numbers of small sewage works inspections undertaken were queried by BJ and JMcC questioned remedial works after inspection. MMcA said NIW co-operated closely with NIEA and remedial action is carried out.

3.4 JMcC added that Loughs Agency have investigated 25 high severity incidents in the area over and above the 15 which NIEA have investigated, most of which NIEA have not been made aware of.

3.5 PA added that it would be helpful if the MOU between NIEA and LA was agreed and signed before the next meeting.

4. Alvin Wilson (AW) – Presentation on draft River Basin Management Plan for the Upper Foyle catchment.

AW gave a presentation on the draft RBMP, outlining the timescales, classification of rivers and lakes and asking the group for ideas on how NIEA can engage and allow full participation during the consultation phase. A copy of the presentation is available at the link below

http://www.ni-environment.gov.uk/water/wfd/public_partic/catchment_stakeholder_groups.htm

4.1 JMcC questioned the accuracy of the monitoring programme and said the classifications differed from Lough Agency's recent monitoring results. PA also questioned the relevance and accuracy of the monitoring classification to the local area. AW replied the data used was collected using standard procedures and was peer reviewed and based on the UK TAG and was sufficient to go forward. JMcC questioned the sub catchment results and AW replied the monitoring information is available on the website. RM also queried the data collected for the plan and AW said that the data from 2005 – 2007 was used for the plan.

4.2 AW highlighted Copper and Zinc levels in the Sperrins area requiring further investigation. JMcC said acidification may be due to forestry operations. Ian Irwin (forest service) replied that the research in the Lough

Melvin Plan revealed most acidification had been derived from the atmosphere and not forestry.

4.3 AW pointed out that pH levels in the Derg water bodies were also identified as lowering river status.

4.4 RM sought clarification on heavily modified water bodies. Gareth Greer outlined the criteria for selection as heavily modified. Modification of river bodies and their affect on river status was discussed.

4.6 JMcC asked if new hydro schemes were being permitted in rivers would this mean the river would become heavily modified.

AP 1 NIEA to provide answer on whether new hydro-schemes licensed will change the status of the water body to heavily modified.

PA proposed to set up a working group to discuss the draft plan due in December before the next CSG meeting in May. JMcC added that organisations could also make individual responses. JL to summon support for working group.

AP 2 JL to ask for volunteers to sit on the RBP working group.

5. Presentation on “Northern Ireland Water Waste Water Compliance for the area – Investing for the future” by Angela Halpenny, NI Water and Michael McAlary, NI Water.

AH outlined NIWs environmental regulation and capital expenditure and MMcA detailed local NIW issues in the Upper Foyle catchment.

5.1 PA asked about the small sewage works serving <250. MMcA said most of the small sewage works serving populations <250 ppe are inherited infrastructure and agreed that many are located in headwater areas. AH added automated sampling of the small works is scheduled annually. MMcA said £10 million has been ring fenced for small works over the next two years.

5.2 JMcC raised transparency of consultation on the priority matrix for small sewage works. TA replied there was internal consultation between NIEA and NIW.

5.3 JmcC raised problems with sewage infrastructure and RM asked would these problems be addressed in the river basin plan. JMcC asked how NIEA were dealing with problems of mis-connections and sullage issues. AW replied any issues would appear in the plan.

5.4 BJ queried storm overflows and AW replied storm overflows from CSO's are consented.

6. Presentation on the Regulation on Northern Ireland Water – Tom Adamson (TA), NIEA, Head of Water Utility Regulation Group.

TA gave a presentation on how NIEA regulate NI Water. A copy of the presentation is available at the link below

http://www.ni-environment.gov.uk/water/wfd/public_partic/catchment_stakeholder_groups.htm

6.1 PA said the prioritisation process of NIW regulation could be more transparent. There is a need to consider how under-investment deals against not meeting the WFD standards. Politicians need to be more aware of the risk of infraction from Europe. MMcA said NIEA and NIW did consult together and there is also the issue of how much the public is willing to pay for water. PA said transparency and consultation were very important for the River Basin Planning Process and needed public participation, not just consultation between NIEA and NIW.

6.2 JMcC asked if a small works causes a pollution incident which is not picked up in the pre-arranged annual monitoring, is it still compliant. TA replied although the works are statistically compliant they could still be polluting; however, they can still be prosecuted. MMcA added that if a works causes a pollution incident it is in breach of its consent and steps will be taken to ensure that this is addressed.

7. Agenda for next meeting

PA explained that the River Basin management plans would take up the majority of the next meeting but asked if there were any burning issues people wanted discussed.

- a) River Basin Management Plans
- b) JMcC asked if someone from Rivers Agency could give a presentation on managing flood risk. Gareth Greer mentioned and provided copies of a recent report on managing flood risk in Northern Ireland and agreed to get a presentation organised for the next meeting.
- c) RM asked for the hydro scheme on the Camowen to be discussed and PA told him that he had spoken to the Council before the meeting and would provide RM with an update.
- d) RR asked for the Strule/Derg water abstraction proposal to be discussed and PA said this should be addressed in the RMBP.
- e) SC asked for an update of the A5 Roadworks – CL said that the ‘preferred corridor consultation’ will take place in February next year and he would forward dates of these meetings as soon as they are available.

AP 3 SC to inform JL when the ‘public consultation’ meetings are being held. JL to inform the group.

Table 2 – Summary of action points.

Ref	Action Point	Action	Update
6.2	6	Alan Morrow to give an update at the next meeting on the new CMS with regard to water quality options and an update on the rational for variations in the closed period in Northern Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales.	Carried over from previous meeting
6.2	7	Mark Livingstone to provide an update on the Nitrates Effectiveness Programme at the next meeting.	Carried over from previous meeting.
8	8	Joanne Livingstone to invite someone from IPPC and Waste and Contaminated land Unit to the next meeting to give a presentation on their role as industrial regulators.	Carried over from previous meeting.
4.6	1	NIEA to provide answer on whether new hydro-schemes licensed will change the status of the water body to 'heavily modified'.	
4	2	JL to ask for volunteers to sit on the RBP working group.	
7	3	SC to inform JL when the 'public consultation meetings are being held. JL to inform the group.	

9. Close

PA thanked everyone for attending and for their input.

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