

Belfast Lough & Lagan Catchment Stakeholder Group

Note of Meeting

7 October 2009

Venue: Island Civic Centre, Lisburn

Attendees:

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| 1. | Dave Foster | Head of Water Management Unit, NIEA (Chair) |
| 2. | David Miller | Senior Water Quality Inspector, NIEA (Presenter) |
| 3. | Gerry Wilson | River Basin Planning Group, NIEA (Presenter) |
| 4. | Helen Nutt | North Eastern Catchment Officer & Acting Emergency Pollution Officer, NIEA (Presenter & Note-taker) |
| 5. | John Bell | Northern Ireland Water Limited (NIWL) |
| 6. | Jim Bradley | Belfast Hills Partnership |
| 7. | Aleathea Brown | River Basin Planning Group, NIEA |
| 8. | Cathy Burns | Lagan Canal Restoration Trust |
| 9. | George Butler | Northern Ireland Water Limited (NIWL) |
| 10. | Daniel Clarke | Lagan Valley Regional Park (LVRP) |
| 11. | Tom Cowan | Inland Fisheries, DCAL |
| 12. | Gary Houston | Iveagh Angling Club |
| 13. | Alan Hudson | Water Quality Inspector, NIEA |
| 14. | Jonathan Kerr | Iveagh Angling Club |
| 15. | Suzanne Lutton | Lagan Corridor Regeneration Manager, Lisburn City Council |
| 16. | Ben McComb | Pollution Prevention, NIEA |
| 17. | Paddy McCrudden | Rivers Agency |
| 18. | Leo McGlinchey | Water Quality Inspector, NIEA |
| 19. | Kevin McGrady | Emergency Pollution Officer, NIEA |
| 20. | Alan Morrow | Countryside Management Branch, DARD |
| 21. | Trevor Ogborn | Dunmurry Community Association |

1. Welcome, outline of agenda and introductions

Dave Foster opened the meeting and welcomed all. Round room introductions.

2. Minutes of the last meeting and update on progress made in addressing the issues raised at the last meeting.

Presentation from Helen Nutt, North East Catchment Officer, NIEA; "Minutes and update on action points from the last meeting."

- 2.1 Minutes have been issued by email and post to all parties who were present at the last meeting and to those who had requested to be corresponding members. The group agreed that in the absence of any further amendments

to the minutes that the minutes would be agreed and posted on the Belfast Lough and Lagan Catchment Stakeholder Group (CSG) website.

ACTION: Helen Nutt to add agreed minutes from the Spring 2009, and the presentations from the Autumn 2009, meetings to the Belfast Lough and Lagan CSG website.

- 2.2 Helen Nutt gave a brief presentation detailing the updates on the action points raised at the last Belfast Lough and Lagan CSG meeting held on Tuesday 7 April 2009.

Summary of actions from the last meeting:

Ref	Action	Update
2.1	Helen Nutt to add agreed minutes and past presentations from CSG meetings to new Belfast Lough and Lagan CSG website.	Belfast Lough and Lagan CSG website has been updated. http://www.ni-environment.gov.uk/water/wfd/public_partic/catchment_stakeholder_groups/belfast_lough_and_lagan.htm
3.1	Dave Foster and Robbie Marshall to liaise with regard to running a sampling trial with an angling club partner.	Meeting was held to discuss this and a partner angling club has been identified.
4.2	Helen Nutt to forward link to Northern Ireland Water upgrade plans to meeting attendees.	Information is available on NIW's website on the "What We're Doing" pages http://www.niwater.com/whatweredoing.asp
6.1	Helen Nutt to circulate the Belfast Lough and Lagan Catchment Stakeholder Group consultation response to the draft River Basin Management Plans to attendees and corresponding members of the Group.	Enclosed with minutes from meeting. ~1000 comments received on dRBMPs, document detailing how comments will be incorporated to be published by NIEA.

3. Discussion on Local Water Management Issues.
Presentation from David Miller and Helen Nutt "Local Water Management Issues & Area Managers Report, Belfast Lough and Lagan Catchment Stakeholder Group."

Helen Nutt emphasised the importance of local people to the resolution of water management problems. She highlighted the Lagan Targeted Catchment Plan and the Connswater Community Greenway and thanked attendees for their continued involvement and support. David Miller gave a presentation with an overview of the pollution incidents that had been

reported since the last meeting, giving a breakdown of their source and the outcomes of recent cases. He highlighted routine and ongoing work that NIEA Regional Operations were involved in in the catchment e.g. consent applications and grey water problem area investigations.

- 3.1 Trevor Ogborn suggested that a break down of incidents would be useful to show how many of the pollution incidents related to new or one off problems and how many were ongoing or recurrent problems.

ACTION: David Miller to provide a breakdown of pollution incidents for future meetings.

- 3.2 Trevor Ogborn raised concerns about the enforcement of submissions on planning applications in the Dunmurry area. He said that a number of planning applications had been issued with submissions relating to non occupancy of new dwellings in relation to their potential impact on the sewage system and that these had been breached. Ben McComb explained that Planning Service classify returns from statutory consultees as either "informatives" or "conditions". "Conditions" are enforceable by Planning law by the Divisional Planning Office, "informatives" are seen as advice and are the responsibility of the local Environmental Health Officers or NIEA to enforce where problems occur.

- 3.3 The meeting discussed compliance of Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) in the area, in particular Edenderry and Hillsborough, and how pollution incidents occurring at these affect reported compliance.

- 3.4 The meeting discussed concerns raised by Jim Bradley about grey water discharges to rivers in the Stewartstown area. He requested a copy of the Drainage Area Plan (DAPs) for the area to determine catchments for WWTWs but was told that these were not in the public domain. A representative from NIW said that the Belfast Tunnel, Terminal Pumping Station and all 6 pumps had been started the day before and that they had worked successfully, he said that this was a long overdue upgrade which would have a positive impact but that many areas were still served by Victorian systems in need of improvements. Kevin McGrady gave an update on NIEA's grey water project, he said that NIEA were aiming towards a good practice document to raise awareness of the problem but that a formal approach to resolve issues on the ground had not yet been formalised.

ACTION: NIEA to provide an update on the misconnections project at the next meeting.

- 3.5 Jim Bradley said that it is important that youth groups and schools are made aware of the aims of the Catchment Stakeholder Groups and that they should be encouraged to become involved in water management and resolving local problems. The meeting agreed that this would be a positive move.

3.6 The meeting discussed the sewage “hot-spots” issue in relation to the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive. Dave Foster said that all Bathing Waters have passed their mandatory standards. George Butler gave an update on the required treatment targets that had been met at the problem WWTWs identified.

4. **Discussion on the way forward for the implementation of the River Basin Management Plans and the development of Local Management Area Plans within the River Basin Districts.**

Presentation from Gerry Wilson River Basin Planning Group, NIEA

Gerry Wilson gave a presentation which detailed the rationale for working at a local level. He gave an overview of the ecological risk based process that had been adopted to target the local implementation of the Water Framework Directive across Northern Ireland through Local Management Area Plans. He detailed how the whole country would be covered in a three year rolling programme with the Lagan being the primary focus in 2010 and Belfast Lough in 2011. The current state of water bodies in the Belfast Lough and Lagan catchment areas were discussed and the targets for improvement were outlined.

4.1 A number of attendees at the meeting said how the Water Framework Directive process had to date been too strategic and “consultation heavy” and that they welcomed the move to local action that the presentation had highlighted. There were requests for more information to be available through the NIEA website.

ACTION: Selection paper on Local Management Area Plans to be added to the NIEA website. (“Pearl mussel over-ride/ conservation” table to be updated.)

ACTION: Link to the draft River Basin Management Plan consultation response document to be sent to CSG members.

ACTION: Local Management Area Plan information sheet to be forwarded to CSG members.

4.2 The meeting discussed how the Local Management Area Plans would be implemented and what staff, role and resource changes there would need to be to ensure the plans worked. NIEA said that staff would be focusing on particular areas and targeting specific sectors where they had been identified as a problem. There are plans for more targeted and investigative monitoring and site visits with the Lagan being the primary focus for 2010.

4.3 NIEA were asked if they have enough staff to implement the Directive properly. Dave Foster said that there had been a joint Departmental bid made for resources by Northern Ireland. He said that this would ensure that there

was a central Government focus on Water Framework Directive implementation. He said that at present Northern Ireland has more sample sites per area than most other European countries.

- 4.4 A member of the meeting asked if the work of NIEA was audited. Dave Foster said that NIEA laboratories were audited and that a number of methodologies were UKAS (UK Accreditation Scheme) accredited. He said that for some methodologies NIEA are the only Government Agency in the UK with accreditation e.g. sampling. He said that a process called "intercalibration" had been applied across Europe to ensure consistency in monitoring approaches.

ACTION: NIEA to provide Curriculum Vitae of accreditations at the next meeting.

- 4.5 The meeting discussed the rolling programme for local implementation of the Directive that had been proposed. There was agreement that the local approach would be beneficial and the balance of regional implications with higher priority sites was discussed. NIEA emphasised that normal routine work would carry on across NI in relation to pollution incidents etc. Tom Cowan said that DARD would be targeting resources to Belfast Lough with regard to designated Shellfish Waters but that normal routine work would carry on.

ACTION: NIEA to provide an update on the compliance of Shellfish Waters at the next meeting.

5. Discussion for the way forward for the CSG meetings

- 5.1 There were discussions about the need to encourage more local involvement in the Catchment Stakeholder Group meetings. Helen Nutt said that she would welcome any suggestions others had as to how to promote attendance. She said that the next meeting would be likely to take more of a workshop format with discussions focusing on the selected Local Management Area. Suggestions on venues and timing of meetings were welcomed by NIEA.

ACTION: All to provide feedback on the venues, timings of meetings and implementation of the Local Management Area Plan through available feedback forms.

6. Close

Dave Foster thanked all for attending and for their input to the discussion.

Summary of actions from the meeting:

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2.1	Helen Nutt to add agreed minutes from the Spring 2009, and the presentations from the Autumn 2009 meetings, to the Belfast Lough and Lagan CSG website.
3.1	David Miller to provide a breakdown of pollution incidents for future meetings.
3.4	NIEA to provide an update on the misconnections project at the next meeting.
4.1(a)	Selection paper on Local Management Area Plans to be added to the NIEA website. ("Pearl mussel over-ride/conservation" table to be updated.)
4.1(b)	Link to the draft River Basin Management Plan consultation response document to be sent to CSG members.
4.1 (c)	Local Management Area Plan information sheet to be forwarded to CSG members.
4.4	NIEA to provide Curriculum Vitae of accreditations at the next meeting.
4.5	NIEA to provide an update on the compliance of Shellfish Waters at the next meeting.
5.1	All to provide feedback on the venues, timings of meetings and implementation of the Local Management Area Plan through available feedback forms.

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