

Minutes of the thirty-eight meeting of the Lower Bann Advisory Committee held on Thursday 9th June 2005 at 10.00am in the Cranagh, Coleraine.

Present

Mr Victor Hamill
 Commander Peter Campbell
 Mr Denzyl Dinsmore
 Cllr R D Stewart
 Mr Robin Ruddock
 Cllr Olive Church
 Mr Archie Gibson (for Prof Dave Wilcock)
 Mr Gregory Woulahan

In attendance

Mr Stephen Douglas (Waterways Ireland)
 Ms Caroline Marshall (Liaison Officer)
 Mr Terry Eakin (EHS)

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Magherafelt District Council, Mr Rob Skelly, Mr James Smyth (Lough Neagh Fishermen's Co-operative Society Limited), Mr Edward Montgomery, Mr Richard Thompson, Ms Kathleen Conlon, Prof Dave Wilcock and Mr David Agnew.

2. Minutes of last meeting – 10th March 2005

The minutes of the last meeting were proposed by Commander Campbell, seconded by Cllr Church and agreed by the meeting.

3. Matters arising from last meeting

The meeting considered the Actions of the last meeting as follows:

Action	Update/Discussion/Future Action
6	<p>WMU to provide chemical and biological statistics for the river and estuary for 2004.</p> <p>To be revisited at next LBAC meeting in 'Water quality and treatment update' agenda item with presentations from Water Service and Water Management Unit.</p> <p>Action 6: WMU to provide chemical and biological statistics for the river and estuary for 2004.</p> <p>Caroline also informed members that WMU and WS would provide an update on the implementation of the Nitrates and Water Framework Directives.</p>
7	<p>Water Service/Water Management Unit to make a presentation on water quality and future treatment proposals in the Lower Bann catchment.</p> <p>To be revisited at next LBAC meeting in 'Water Quality Update' agenda item with presentations from Water Service and Water Management Unit.</p> <p>Action 7: Water Service/Water Management Unit to make a presentation on water quality and future treatment proposals in the Lower Bann catchment.</p>
9	<p>LO and WI to discuss a way forward for the preparation of framework for jetty development on the Lower Bann.</p>

	<p>Caroline informed members that she and the Chairman would be meeting Waterways Ireland staff to discuss this and other relevant issues.</p> <p>Action 9: LO and WI to discuss a way forward for the preparation of framework for jetty development on the Lower Bann</p>
11	<p>LO to call three water based activity public meetings, in partnership with relevant agencies, and update the LBAC recommendations as necessary. Caroline informed members that she had been unable to secure a meeting with John Paul's replacement and as a result had been unable to arrange a date for the Drumaheglis meeting, but that the other meetings were scheduled as follows:</p> <p>Portglenone Community Centre – Monday, 20th June at 7.30pm and Coleraine Town Hall, Monday 27th June 2005 at 7.30pm.</p> <p>As Coleraine Councillors had a pre-arranged meeting regarding the Draft Area Plan, it was agreed to review the date of the Coleraine Meeting.</p> <p>Action 29: Date of Coleraine Public Meeting to be reviewed and Drumaheglis to be agreed.</p>
16	<p>LO to set up a meeting/site visit with MDC and landowners in relation to the erosion alleviation project.</p> <p>This meeting is water level dependent – to be arranged.</p> <p>Action 16: LO to set up a meeting/site visit with MDC and landowners in relation to the erosion alleviation project.</p>
19	<p>Letter to be sent to Water Service to highlight concerns about the water quality outwith designated Bathing Waters in the River and along the coast and to seek clarification as to a possible duty of care in these areas on the part of Water Service.</p> <p>To be revisited at next LBAC meeting in 'Water Quality Update' agenda item with presentations from Water Service and Water Management Unit.</p> <p>Action 19: Letter to be sent to Water Service to highlight concerns about the water quality outwith designated Bathing Waters in the River and along the coast and to seek clarification as to a possible duty of care in these areas on the part of Water Service.</p>
20	<p>Water Service to provide missing sections of the Dispersion Compliance Report and the latest version of the Tidal Modelling Study.</p> <p>Missing sections from Dispersion Compliance Report supplied.</p>
21	<p>Meeting to be set up with replacement of the Director of Leisure Services of Ballymoney Borough Council. Item 11 refers.</p> <p>Action 21: Meeting to be set up with replacement of the Director of Leisure Services of Ballymoney Borough Council.</p>
22	<p>Letter to be written to the Lough Neagh Fishermen's Co-operative Society Limited reiterating the offer of a meeting, highlighting that change would not be made to previous minutes of Eel Express and that attendance at meetings would be extremely useful and more productive.</p> <p>Approach agreed by Management Committee and letter sent.</p>
23	<p>Working group to be established to steer the preparation of a Lower Bann Management Strategy.</p>

	Item 24 refers: Action 23: Working group to be established to steer the preparation of a Lower Bann Management Strategy.
24	LNLBMC to confirm that the LBAC can go ahead with the preparation of a Lower Bann Management Strategy. To be discussed on 23 rd June 2005, although this action is specifically highlighted in the Advisory Committees' Business Plan..
25	Landowner to be contacted regarding removal of dumped agricultural and general waste on river bank downstream of Newferry. Landowner identified and contacted. He agreed to remove the waste material as soon as possible.
26	Liaison to take place with NIAPA and UFU regarding prevention of dumping along the Lower Bann and its tributaries and acceptable disposal of farm waste. Initial discussions held. Meeting to follow. Action 26: Liaison to take place with NIAPA and UFU regarding prevention of dumping along the Lower Bann and its tributaries and acceptable disposal of farm waste.
27	Letter to be sent to local authorities asking for intentions towards a litter clean up and education campaign. Pending Action 27: Letter to be sent to local authorities asking for intentions towards a litter clean up and education campaign
28	Report to be prepared on the need for insurance for the Advisory Committee. Members were informed that the Management Committee discussed this issue and agreed the following: ‘... that insurance was probably not needed for the Advisory Committees as it was providing ‘advice’ and not ‘acting’. However it was agreed that Caroline should liaise with Lagan Valley Management Committee staff and report back.’ After discussion, members agreed with the LNAC and recommended that the Management Committee seek legal advice from Senior Council. ACTION 30: Management Committee to research need for insurance for Advisory Committee.

4. Liaison Officer's Report March 2005

Caroline drew members' attention to the June 2005 Report. In particular, members discussed the following:

a. TOLS for Water Abstraction

Caroline informed members that Water Service is examining the possibility of taking the same amount of water, but from a larger number of locations spread around Lough Neagh & possibly the Lower Bann. She indicated that she had

spoken to consultants, employed by WS, and that these consultants would be recommending that this abstraction point location (not quantity) issue would require a full Environmental Statement. Caroline informed members that both the Committees would be consulted in the preparation of the full Environmental Statement.

Members welcomed this further consultation and highlighted that it would be appropriate for Dave Wilcock and Edward Montgomery to meet with the consultants when required.

b. Comments on Nitrates Directive Consultation

Members agreed the additional comments made by the LNAC.

c. Safety & Navigation Working Group – Discussion of the Navigation

Authority Report & Markers at Cutts issues

Caroline informed members that the SNWK met on 3rd May 2005. The main agenda item was the 'Navigation Authority Status for Lough Neagh, the River Blackwater and the Upper Bann' Report, prepared for DCAL by Waterways Ireland. Caroline summarised the relevant issues as follows:

- Excellent document
- A navigation authority should be established post haste.
- The Safety & Navigation Working Group of the Lough Neagh & Lower Bann Advisory Committees is best placed to become the consultative forum.
- There should be 'non-executive' directors on the board of Waterways Ireland to provide local expertise.

The LNAC will be taking forward these issues as appropriate.

Caroline also informed members that the SNWG would be considering the issue relating to the new navigation markers at the Cutts at their next meeting.

d. Lower Bann Partnership & Funding Applications

Caroline informed members that the application to DARD for £750 000 had been successful, but that a formal Letter of Offer had not yet been received. She also highlighted that an application had been lodged to seek additional funds for water based recreation projects.

e. Integrated Coastal Zone Management

Caroline informed members that she had forwarded comments on ICZM issues, attended a workshop to consider the draft Strategy, the Departments would now be considering an updated draft and that there would be another public consultation soon. She also indicated that there would be opportunity to comment at stakeholder and regional awareness meetings. Members agreed that a working group should be established to comment on the next draft ICZM Strategy. Stephen Douglas indicated that he would like to be a member of this Working Group.

Action 31: Working Group to be established to comments on the Draft ICZM Strategy.

f. Draft Northern Area Plan 2016

Caroline informed members that the Draft Northern Area Plan was out for consultation and that the majority of the River corridor, except Coleraine Town, was either designated as a Countryside Policy Area or as Green Belt. Cllrs Church and Stewart informed the meeting that Coleraine Borough Council has engaged the services of consultants to draft its comments and that comments from the LBAC could be fed into this process. Members agreed that the LBAC should formulate and forward comments on the proposals that impact on the River corridor and wider estuary in particular.

Action 32: Comments on the Draft Northern Area Plan to be drawn up, agreed and submitted.

5. **Any Other Business**

a. Castledawson to Randalstown Dualling

Caroline informed members that she had received details of further scheme options / scheme refinements for the new dualling route proposals. The red route variant leaves the original road line further to the west than the originally proposed red route and appears to avoid the majority of the swan feeding sites. A purple variant, on the Randalstown side of the Bann, does not appear to impact on the low lying wetlands. Copies of the new proposals are available from Sperrin House on request. After discussion, it was agreed that an appropriate response should be compiled with input from Gregory Woulahan.

Action 33: Comments on the revised Randalstown –Castledawson dualling proposals to be compiled and forwarded.

b. Number of boats operating within designated zones

Caroline informed members that she had received calls from people who were concerned with the numbers of boats/personal water craft operating, at any one time, within the designated water sport zones. Members agreed that a letter should be sent to Ballymena, Ballymoney and Magherafelt Councils to highlight this concern and need for action.

Action34: Letter to be sent to Magherafelt, Ballymoney and Ballymena Councils highlighting the need for management of numbers of craft operating within the designated water sports zones.

c. Approval for Events on the River

Caroline informed members that there was now a need to gain approval from Waterways Ireland to hold events on the River. After discussion, members agreed that it would be appropriate for Waterways Ireland to clarify what constitutes an event and publicise this requirement widely including, if appropriate, the issuing of a 'Notice to Mariners'.

Action 35: Letter to be sent to Waterways Ireland indicating the need for publicity and, if appropriate, the issuing of a notice to

mariners regarding the need for official approval of river based events upstream of Coleraine.

- d. Environment NI – A Vision for the Future
A flyer for a conference, scheduled for 18th and 19th October 2005, organised by EHS was tabled. Copies are available from Sperrin House on request.
- e. Water Framework Directive stakeholder participation consultation.
Notes on the Water Framework Directive stakeholder participation consultation meeting were tabled. Copies can be obtained from Sperrin House on request.
- f. Proposed Drainage (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations'
Members were informed that the Committees had been invited to comment on 'Proposed Drainage (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations'. Members agreed that Caroline should draft comments and agree these with appropriate members.

Action 36: LO to draft, circulate as appropriate and submit comments on the Proposed Drainage (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations'.

- g. Directors for South Antrim Rural Network
It was agreed that no LBAC members would be put forward for the election of directors to the board of SARN.
- h. Ownership of the bed and soil of Lough Neagh
The issue of future ownership of the bed and soil of Lough Neagh was discussed briefly. Caroline informed members that the Lough Neagh Advisory Committee was considering this matter.
- i. Dumping along banks of River
The dumping of hard core along sections of the east and west bank of the River, above the Cutts was discussed. It was agreed that a long term solution should be highlighted under Action 26 above but, that in the interim, the LO should liaise with the land owners with a view to removal of hard core / prevention. It was also agreed that the Management Committee should be made aware of the issue and act as appropriate.
Action 37: Landowners to be contacted with a view to removal of hard core / prevention of dumping at sites upstream of the Cutts.

Action 38: Management Committee to be made aware of recent dumping upstream of the Cutts.

- j. Rescue Service on River

Members discussed the recent changes in the rescue services associated with the River and Loughs. It was agreed that liaison should take place with MCA and the Fire and Rescue Service to ascertain any changes in potocol and that the issue should be placed on the agenda of the Safety & Navigation Working Group as appropriate.

Action 39: Update to be obtained on Rescue protocol for the River and Loughs and SNWG to advise as appropriate.

6. Date and venue of next meeting – 15th September 2005

The date of the next meeting was agreed for Thursday, 15th September 2005. It was also agreed that the meeting would take place in Sperrin House and that the main agenda item would be a focus on water quality and treatment.

Mr Mike Ford and Mr John Donnelly presented an overview of the proposed development at the Cranagh. This included outline details of a new hotel, holiday cottages, slipway, moorings and restaurant.

Mr Stephen Douglas and Mr Joe Gillespie from Waterways Ireland facilitated a boat trip on the River from the Cranagh to view their recently refurbished Lock Keeper's cottage at the Cutts.

The Chairman expressed thanks to Mr Seamus Carey, Mr Mike Ford and Mr John Donnelly of Cranagh Developments for providing lunch and the meeting venue and to Mr Stephen Douglas and Mr Joe Gillespie of Waterways Ireland for facilitating a boat trip on the River.

Action List from LBAC meeting held on 9th June 2005

Action	Implementer	
6	WMU to provide chemical and biological statistics for the river and estuary for 2004.	WMU
7	Water Service/Water Management Unit to make a presentation on water quality and future treatment proposals in the Lower Bann catchment.	WMU/WS/ Caroline Marshall
9	LO and WI to discuss a way forward for the preparation of framework for jetty development on the Lower Bann.	Caroline Marshall
29	Date of Coleraine Public Meeting to be reviewed and Drumaheglis to be agreed.	Caroline Marshall
16	LO to set up a meeting/site visit with MDC and landowners in relation to the erosion alleviation project.	Caroline Marshall
19	Letter to be sent to Water Service to highlight concerns about the water quality outwith designated Bathing Waters in the River and along the coast and to seek clarification as to a possible duty of care in these areas on the part of Water Service.	Caroline Marshall
21	Meeting to be set up with replacement of the Director of Leisure Services of	Caroline Marshall

	Ballymoney Borough Council.	
23	Working group to be established to steer the preparation of a Lower Bann Management Strategy.	Caroline Marshall
26	Liaison to take place with NIAPA and UFU regarding prevention of dumping along the Lower Bann and its tributaries and acceptable disposal of farm waste.	Caroline Marshall
27	Letter to be sent to local authorities asking for intentions towards a litter clean up and education campaign	Caroline Marshall
30	Management Committee to research need for insurance for Advisory Committee.	Management Committee
31	Working Group to be established to comments on the Draft ICZM Strategy.	Caroline Marshall
32	Comments on the Draft Northern Area Plan to be drawn up, agreed and submitted.	Caroline Marshall
33	Comments on the revised Randalstown –Castledawson dualling proposals to be compiled and forwarded.	Caroline Marshall Gregory Woulahan
34	Letter to be sent to Magherafelt, Ballymoney and Ballymena Councils highlighting the need for management of numbers of craft operating within the designated water sports zones.	Caroline Marshall
35	Letter to be sent to Waterways Ireland indicating the need for publicity and the issuing of a ‘ Notice to Mariners’ regarding the need for official approval of river based events upstream of Coleraine.	Caroline Marshall
36	LO to draft, circulate as appropriate and submit comments on the Proposed Drainage (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations’.	Caroline Marshall
37	Landowners to be contacted with a view to removal of hard core / prevention of the dumping at sites upstream of the Cutts.	Caroline Marshall
38	Management Committee to act as appropriate on recent dumping upstream of the Cutts.	Management Committee
39	Update to be obtained on Rescue protocol for the River and Loughs and SNWG to advise as appropriate.	Caroline Marshall

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