

MEETING MINUTES
LOUGH CARRA CATCHMENT ASSOCIATION (LCCA)
 Tuesday 9 October 2018
 8.00 To 9.30 pm, Corley's Pub in Ballintubber

Chairperson	Tom Byrne
Vice-Chairperson	Peter Byrne
Secretary	Lynda Huxley
Treasurers	Joe Flannelly and Pat Gibbons
Technical Advisors	Chris Huxley and Cilian Roden

Antony Baynes	Sean Coyne	Eadoin Ni Neill
Verena Berard	Ronan Cusack	James OBrien
Peter Byrne	Ailbhe Douglas	Tom Quinn
Tom Byrne	Frank Fahey	Brian Reidy
John Campbell	Marie Farrell	Cilian Roden
Norita Clesham	Padraig Farrell	Lucy Roberts
James Corbett	Olivia Feeney	Sean Roberts
John Corbett	Pat Gibbons	Michael Sweeney
Peter Comer	Chris Huxley	Deirdre Walsh
William Cormacan	Lynda Huxley	Maura Walshe
APOLOGIES : Ray Broughton Joe Flannelly Peter Heaps Michael Hegarty	Mick Kane Fergal O'Dowd Michael Sweeney John Thornton Bernadette White Fiona White	

AGENDA ITEM
The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting including especially those attending for the first time.
<p>Presentation 1 : Verena Berard on the recent Irish Uplands Forum Conference held in Mulranny on 4 and 5 October.</p> <p>Brief Summary :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The conference programme can be found on Irish Uplands forum website https://irishuplandsforum.org/portfolio/conference-programme-2018/ • The Irish Uplands Forum is a voluntary body made up of hill farmers, ecologists, community members, state bodies etc. • The Mulranny event's main importance was providing the opportunity to share knowledge in innovative ways and on a local basis • James Moran gave a talk on locally led EIPs and the recently tested RBAPS scheme (both schemes have been mentioned at LCCA meetings) • Bridget Murphy talked about Glás and how this scheme is failing for the hill farmers. • Denis Strong of NPWS gave a talk on Wild Nephin • There was a visit to an Irish Natura Hill Farmers Association farm • Minister Michael Ring attended all the talks and field trips on day 2 of the conference. <p>Questions :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no questions

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1.	<p>Minutes of the last meeting</p> <p>The Chair read out the minutes of the last meeting held on 13 September 2018.</p> <p>Olivia Feeney asked for an amendment to the minutes relating to the visit to the Biogas plant and spreading of remaining 'sludge' from the biogas process. The sludge is spread on land in Galway and Roscommon and not Galway and Leitrim.</p> <p>Proposed : Al McDonnell Seconded : Olivia Feeney</p>
2.	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>a) <u>Predator Control</u> Pdraig Farrell is following up with NPWS and Dept of Agricultural but is also awaiting meetings with the Irish Natura Hill Farmers Association and the Gun clubs. He will give feedback at the next meeting.</p> <p>b) <u>Legal Status</u> Chris Huxley reported that the group now have a draft Memorandum of Association, Constitution and Articles of Association. The Working Group will meet in late November if finalise the process.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action : Legal Status Working group</p> <p>c) <u>Kerry Life Project</u> Kerry LIFE projected was awarded around €5 million and appears to be relevant to the LCCA potential LIFE project application.</p> <p>The LCCA fact finding trip to the Kerry LIFE Project was due to take place tomorrow, 10 October. However is was decided to postpone this until it is known if the LCCA will be able to appoint a consultant to carry out a feasibility study. It would be very appropriate to have a consultant as part of the delegation. Richard O'Callaghan, the project Manager, has been informed and is agreeable to hosting the visit in a couple of months time.</p> <p>The chair asked for approval from the floor – there was full approval.</p> <p>d) <u>Public Talks</u> As mentioned at September meeting, a Public Talks event will be organised for February 2019.</p> <p>e) <u>Education</u> Mick Kane and Tom Byrne have been liaising on education and raising awareness in schools and communities. Mick Bowden of <i>Streamscapes</i> has provided Tom Byrne will all their educational material and he has reviewed this and finds it to be very well prepared. It complies with curriculum requirements and science aspects. <i>Streamscapes</i> attend a school for a day and teach the pupils in water related science topics which means the teachers don't have to cover this topic.</p> <p>Mark Bowden and Maura Lyons of Leave No Trace are collaborating to put together a funding application for a pilot project at schools in the Carra Catchment.</p> <p>Tom asked approval from the meeting to attend a <i>Streamscapes</i> session at the National School in Claran near Headford, from 9.30 until 12 noon on 10 October, representing the LCCA and observing how this programme is applied in the classroom. He will also try to attend the afternoon field trip. There was full agreement.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Action : Mick Kane and Tom Byrne</p>

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f) Leader Funding Application

Norita Clesham confirmed that relevant documentation had been supplied to her and the application that it will be presented to the Evaluation Committee who are scheduled to meet 10.30 am on 10 October. Assuming the application is successful it then has to go to the Pobal and then the final stage is for it to be approved by the Mayo LCDC LAG committee who make the final decision (probably November 2018).

The Chair thanked Norita for her support during this process.

g) Summary of process LCCA are going through

The chair summarised the current situation for those present.

At the moment the LCCA is going through various bureaucratic steps with the purpose that at the end of the process the association will be able to appoint a consultant without being out of pocket and through the receipt of grant funding.

The current aim is to achieve a LIFE project would be a comprehensive programme that would provide substantial funding to achieve the goals as agreed at the meeting of April 2018. If the LCCA is successful in achieving a LIFE programme it would be the first for the county.

h) Funding and Bank Account

€450.00 received from the Carra Mask Federation fundraising event

€1,500.00 grant received from LawCo

€100.00 petty cash given to the secretary

Total in the account to date : €3,648.75

3. Any Other Business

a) Report from Cilian Roden on recent survey of Lough Carra

Cilian Roden informed the meeting that in 2011 he and Paul Murphy were engaged by NPWS to carry out an underwater botanical survey of the lake. The outcome of that survey was that the lake was good in part but in others was bad.

NPWS engaged Cilian and Paul to repeat this survey in 2018 and they found the lake to be slightly worse than in 2011. They compared and contrasted the same locations.

However, whilst the Castle Carra basin was relatively clear, the Annie's area was a 'horrible disgrace'. What they found at Annie's would alarm any fresh water ecologist. The Annie's river is disgraceful and a growing plague with more and more nitrates and phosphates entering the lake. The Whorled Water Milfoil had grown alarmingly and at several locations in the lake it is now 4 metres high and impenetrable. In 3 locations it covers several hectares.

Therefore, the overall status of the lake from their survey is 'unfavourable'

Under Article 17, NPWS must submit a report to Brussels every 5 years and for this report Lough Carra will not be given good status by NPWS but 'unfavourable'.

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Comments from the floor :

Sean Coyne of Lough Carra Anglers Association said that the anglers consider the area of Castle Carra to be fishable but other areas are unfishable due to the weed cover.

Tom Byrne added that the only way to address this problem is to reduce the nutrients entering the lake and this is one of the association's main objectives.

Al McDonnell said that Cilian's finding confirm what everyone who uses the lake as been observing. The lake is in definite decline which is very worrying. He added that he is now waiting 30 months for a report from the EPA on the sampling carried out at Annie's river but he still does not have the analysis. He added that he is prepared to go to the EPA again to ask for the report.

Cilian added that the EPA has 5 categories for water bodies and having seen the current state of lake he believes the EPA could not allocate it better than 'moderate' and Annie's should be allocated worse than that. If the status 'moderate' is allocated to a water body then this demands that something should be done.

Chris Huxley added that the new sampling at Annie's was carried out on the river not the lake. He said that if the EPA is asked again for the report and does not produce it that the LCCA could request the field data under Freedom of Information.

The meeting agreed the following approach :

- 1) Al McDonnell will go personally to the EPA offices by the end of this week to request the report.
- 2) Al McDonnell will also ask Mick Kane, the Water Communities Officer, to request the report from the EPA since the they had previously asked that all requests to them be submitted via Mick.
- 3) If neither are successful what the next approach should be will be discussed further at the November meeting.

b) Peter Comer of Teagasc/Law Sat

Peter informed the meeting that they are active with a desk top study of Lough Carra and following the outcome of that they will be providing intensive advice to farmers.

c) EPA-funded research project at Trinity College Dublin (TCD)

Lynda Huxley informed the meeting that Arielle Hesse, postdoctoral researcher from TCD has requested a meeting with members of the LCCA to learn more about the association and what issues the group is focussed on addressing. She is currently carrying out postdoctoral research on an EPA-funded project examining source water protection in group water schemes. The team have a website www.waterschemes.ie where you can learn more about the project.

Chris and Lynda Huxley have agreed to meet Arielle on Monday 15 October at 11.30am in the café in Balla town. Any other members of the LCCA are welcome to attend this meeting. Olivia Feeney said she would join the meeting.

The Chair asked for blanket approval for all decisions and discussions from the meeting. There was full approval from the floor.

7. NEXT MEETING

**The Next Meeting will be held in the Village Inn at Partry
TUESDAY 20 September 2018 starting at 8pm sharp.**