

AGM MINUTES
LOUGH CARRA CATCHMENT ASSOCIATION (LCCA)

Tuesday 18 February 2020
8.00 To 8.30 pm, Carnacon Community Centre

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

PRESENT :		
Tony Baynes	David Duffy	Al McDonnell
Verena Berard	Padraig Farrell	Paddy McGing
Peter Bowyer	Eugene Finnerty	Gerry McHale
Peter Byrne	Joe Flannelly	Pat McHale
Tom Byrne	Pat Gibbons	Peter Mitchell
John Campbell	Ger Heverin	Susan Pryce
Peter Comer	Teresa Horan	Kevin Sheridan
Paul Connolly	Walter Hughes	Pat Stanton
Séan Coyne	Chris Huxley	Alan Stephens
Ronan Cusack	Lynda Huxley	Kelly Trunnel
Philip Doddy	Michael Kingdon	
APOLOGIES :		
Ray Broughton	William Cormacan	Cilian Roden
Deborah Broughton	Michael Hegarty	Deirdre Walsh
	Bryan Kennedy	Will Woodrow

AGENDA ITEMS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first Annual General Meeting of the Lough Carra Catchment Association since the organisation was formed in April 2018.

Chairman's Address

The Chair read out the LCCA GOALS :

To restore, protect and conserve the ecological integrity of Lough Carra and its lakeshore habitats and to ensure the quality of drinking water from the lough.

BY:

Promoting and encouraging truly sustainable and environmentally sensitive land use practices in the catchment; and

Seeking and promoting ways of reducing nutrient inputs into the lough from all sources, including agriculture, forestry and septic tanks; and

Pursuing methods to prevent any form of pollution of the lough; and

Raise awareness of the unique values of the lough and promoting the enjoyment of its environment by all sectors of society.

He then read out details of the three committees of the LCCA :

Technical : Chris Huxley, Cilian Roden, Verena Berard, Bernie White, William Cormacan, Water Communities Officer

Education : Tom Byrne, Teresa Horan, Water Communities Officer, Ronan Cusack, John Campbell, Emer Morrin, Lynda Huxley, Sally Shaw-Smith

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Farmer Liaison : Joe Flannelly, Pat Gibbons, Olivia Feeney

He highlighted that the LCCA is seeking to address the issues of water quality through the EU LIFE programme through meaningful and significant practical remedial measures, along with its network of connections :

Geological Survey Ireland (GSI)
Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI)
Mayo County Council
Local Areas Water Programme (LawPro)
South West Mayo Leader Programme
National Federation of Group Water Schemes (NFGWS)
Environment Protection Agency (EPA)
National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)
Coillte
Office of Public Works (OPW)

The EU LIFE application for Lough Carra is for 5 million euros. The LCCA has obtained funding through the South West Mayo Leader Fund to employ consultants WoodrowSS to put together a Feasibility Study and prepare a Concept Note. Mayo Co Co have agreed to be the Co-ordinating Beneficiary should the LIFE application be successful.

The LCCA's Farmer Liaison sub-committee has carried out a survey amongst farmers in the catchment and the findings of this have been incorporated into the Feasibility Study prepared by WoodrowSS. They have also instigated a solar pump cattle watering systems on a feeder stream of Lough Carra, as identified by the IFI. This solar pump system delivers water to a drinker and also powers an electric fence to prevent cattle from entering the stream or lake.

The LCCA's Education sub-committee will be producing an A6 booklet 'Lough Carra – A Gem Worth Preserving' as a tool to highlight issues that affect the lake.

Representatives of the LCCA have visited :

- EPA offices in Castlebar
- Biogas project
- Kerry LIFE project office

Talks at monthly meetings have been as follows :

- Verena Berard on RBAPS (Results Based Payment System farming system)
- Chris Huxley 'The Ecology of Lough Carra'
- Michael Hegarty and Benjamin Thebadeau 'The Joyce Country Western Lakes Geopark'
- Bernie White of LawPro
- Solar Pump Solutions
- Geological Survey Ireland
- Dr Patrick Bresnihan on the EPA funded 'Qualities of Water' project
- Sean Finan, Biochar
- Peter Mitchell, LawPro

The Chair highlighted that the network of connections and the breadth of knowledge amongst the LCCA and the awareness raising activities are helping attain the Goals laid out above.

He closed his address by thanking everyone for attending the meetings and for supporting the LCCA. He thanked the Treasurer and Secretary for their reports.

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Secretary's Report

The LCCA came into being as an informal NGO with a constitution on 18 April 2018 and the goal:

To restore, protect and conserve the ecological integrity of Lough Carra and its lakeshore habitats and to ensure the quality of drinking water from the Lough.

Subsequently, on 3 May 2019, the LCCA achieved legal status by becoming incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee, with seven Directors (Tom Byrne, Peter Byrne, Joe Flannelly, Pat Gibbons, Cilian Roden, Chris Huxley and myself).

Currently, efforts are underway to attain Charitable Status as the final step in establishing the Association's legal status.

Since initial formation, the LCCA has held open meetings every month, usually on a Tuesday evening in either Carnacon, Partry or Ballintubber and once at Cushlough. The meetings have had an average attendance of around 30 people, although a total of over 100 have participated at various times which includes several state agencies mentioned by the Chairman. Notification of meetings is sent by text, email and on facebook and the website www.loughcarra.org.

The minutes of every meeting can be found on the Lough Carra website as well as being sent by email to everyone on the mailing list prior to the next meeting.

At most meetings, there is one or more presentations from experts on relevant topics and a discussion of activities undertaken and planned.

Three committees have been formed:

The Farmer Liaison Committee led by Joe Flannelly has pursued activities linked to the farming community and is currently undertaking a survey of farmers in the catchment. They have also initiated a pilot scheme to provide solar-powered water troughs to farmers and they are investigating the potential of biochar in removing nutrients from inflowing watercourses.

The Education Committee, led by Tom Byrne, has targeted local schools with an awareness programme which has included talk by IFI staff and the publication of two educational booklets. The booklet: Lough Carra – a Gem Worth Preserving was launched on 7 February 2020, attended by nearly 80 people, in the Linenhall, Castlebar, and will be distributed to all schools in the area, community groups and individuals. The Linenhall event was also the opening of the photo exhibition "Qualities of Water" arising from an academic research project led by Dr Patrick Bresnihan which had involved members of LCCA. The booklet "The Marl Crusts of Lough Carra" produced by Dr Philip Doddy for the LCCA has been printed by the Association and is also being distributed to schools and local individuals.

The Technical Committee, led by Chris Huxley, whose main task has been to put together a list of proposed remedial and protective actions and to use this as the basis for preparing an application for European LIFE funding for a catchment-wide project to address nutrient enrichment of the lough and the decline in biodiversity. Consultants (Woodrow Sustainable Solutions) were hired to carry out a feasibility study and prepare a LIFE Concept Note with Leader funding through South West Mayo Development Co. Although unsuccessful in 2019, the application received a high score from the assessors and a revised bid will be submitted this year.

Several grant applications have been made:

- Leader funding of around € 25,000 was obtained to engage the consultants to carry out the feasibility study as just mentioned.
- A Community Environment Action Fund grant of € 1,200 was received for promotional material and launching the booklet.

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- Total grants of € 3,000 were received from the Community Water Development Fund for booklet production and organisational support.
- We are now awaiting the result of further applications for grants from the Community Water Development Fund 2020.

Insurance to cover meeting and events was taken out in August 2018 renewed in August 2019.

Events held in Heritage Week :

2018 : Doon Peninsula and Moorehall walk and talk.

Conferences :

- January 2019 : Tom Byrne and Chris Huxley gave a presentation on Lough Carra and LCCA at the Regional Operations Committee meeting.
- October 2019 : Tom Byrne and Chris Huxley gave presentation on Lough Carra and the LCCA at the UK & Ireland Lakes Network organised by the EPA. Bryan Kennedy produced a video on Lough Carra for this event. Next day was a field trip to Church Island.
- December 2019 : Tom Byrne and Lynda Huxley represented LCCA at the LawPro Catchment Partnership and Rivers Trust Conference in Athlone.

Treasurer's Report

Joe Flannelly presented the report on behalf of himself and co-treasurer, Pat Gibbons.

He explained that rather than a yearly report they have given a monthly report at each LCCA meeting.

Copy of the report is attached to the minutes.

He highlighted that the LCCA does not currently have a membership fee.

He also confirmed that the LCCA does not have any assets and has not held any Raffles.

The last statement received from the Bank of Ireland was dated 25 October 2019 and the total in the account as of 18 February 2020 is 3,144.00

The Credit Union account is broken down into two sections 1) Main Account 2) Flexi Account. The total is the Credit Union as of 18 February 2020 is 7,292.53.

The total from Bank of Ireland and Credit Union is 10,436.53

He highlighted that a loan was taken out with Clann Credo to fund the WoodrowSS Consultancy and there are interest payments on this loan. Once the Woodrow consultancy is completed the South West Mayo Leader Grant will be used to pay off this loan.

There were no questions from the floor and the Chair signed off on the accounts.

Election of Officers

All Committee members stood down.

Paul Connolly of the NFGWS (National Federation of Group Water Schemes) volunteered to Chair the Election of Officers.

Position : Chair

Sean Coyne proposed Tom Byrne

Seconded by Al McDonnell

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Tom Byrne accepted the position of Chair

Position : Secretary

Verena Berard proposed Lynda Huxley
Seconded by Pdraig Farrell
Lynda Huxley accepted the position of Secretary

Position : Treasurer

Al McDonnell proposed joint Treasurers Joe Flannelly and Pat Gibbons
Seconded by Pat Staunton
Joe Flannelly and Pat Gibbons accepted the position of joint Treasurers.

Position : Vice Chair

Sean Coyne proposed Peter Byrne
Seconded by Pat Gibbons
Peter Byrne accepted the position of Vice Chair

Tom Byrne as re-elected Chair of the LCCA stated that under Company Law the present Directors are obliged to formally retire and then be reappointed if they so wish. All Directors 7 agreed to be reappointed :

Director 1 : Chris Huxley

proposed by Tom Byrne and seconded by Peter Byrne

Director 2 : Lynda Huxley

proposed by Tom Byrne and seconded by Chris Huxley

Director 3 : Joe Flannelly

proposed by Tom Byrne and seconded by Pat Gibbons

Director 4 : Pat Gibbons

proposed by Tom Byrne and seconded by Chris Huxley

Director 5: Cilian Roden

proposed by Tom Byrne and seconded by Chris Huxley

Director 6 : Peter Byrne

proposed by Tom Byrne and seconded by Joe Flannelly

Director 7 : Tom Byrne

proposed by Chris Huxley and seconded by Lynda Huxley

The LCCA can have a maximum of 10 Directors.

Director 8 : Sean Coyne

Peter Byrne proposed Sean Coyne as an additional Director and this was seconded by Chris Huxley.

AGM closed.