

LOUGH CARRA CATCHMENT ASSOCIATION
18 JUNE 2021– DIRECTORS’ MEETING MINUTES
OUTDOOR MEETINGS AT CARRAJAMES

Present :

Tom Byrne (Chair)
Lynda Huxley (Secretary)
Peter Byrne (Vice-Chair)
Joe Flannelly (Treasurer)
Pat Gibbons (Vice-Treasurer)
Chris Huxley (Technical Advisor)
Cilian Roden (Technical Advisor)

Apologies :
Sean Coyne

AGENDA ITEMS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Minutes of the last meeting

The Chair read out the minutes of the last meeting held on 11 May 2021 by zoom.

Proposed : Pat Gibbons
Seconded : Cilian Roden

Matters Arising :

- One matter arising from Peter Byrne regarding the by-law mentioned under Point 1 : Peter is getting clarification on this as it is believed part of the process was completed some years ago. Chris Huxley highlighted that any previous draft by-law would have to be modified to reflect the current ecological state of Lough Carra and the need to prevent the introduction of zebra mussel.
- There was a short discussion regarding zebra mussel and the worrying fact that many people think that having zebra mussel in a lake is a positive thing because the water becomes clear. However, what they don't realise is that they cause long-term and irreversible damage to the ecosystem. It was agreed that every attempt should be made to keep zebra mussel out of Lough Carra.
- Tom Byrne confirmed that he had communicated the LCCA Directors' observations regarding the draft Moorehall Master Plan to William Cormacan of NPWS by the 21 May deadline.

1. Companies Register

Chris confirmed that the new Director, Sean Coyne, is now registered as a Trustee. This involved correspondence with the Companies Register and the Charities Regulator.

The registered charity number (Reg. Charity No. 20206133) is now on the Lough Carra website as is the LCCA logo.

The Secretary had a stamp made to be used on official documents giving LCCA email and charity number.

2. LIFE Project

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The LIFE Project is an extensive 160 page document. Chris Huxley gave a provisional outline of the LIFE Project to the Directors as follows :

- The details of the LIFE Project will not be confirmed until all revisions/modifications have been agreed with the EC. This should be within one month, but until then the document is not final as there may be adjustment to some components.
- LIFE Lough Carra has a total budget of around €4,950,000 of which 60% is from EU funds. Thus, about €2 million comes from the project beneficiaries in both cash and contributions in kind.
- The project has input from “Beneficiaries” who contribute to the project (cash and/or in kind) and “Partners” who do not contribute materially but play an active part in the project’s actions. See below for break-down :

Coordinating Beneficiary :

The project is led by Mayo CoCo as Coordinating Beneficiary. They run the project in a financial sense but the actions of the project are subject to a steering committee of which LCCA will be a part.

Associated Beneficiaries :

- Dept of Agriculture
- Geological Survey Ireland
- Coillte
- NPWS
- LCCA

Partners :

- EPA
- OPW
- LawPro
- IFI
- VWT
- Teagasc
- NFGWS

The project objectives are defined in the LIFE Application and some Project Actions are listed below :

- Project Set up
- Project Management
- GSI study of groundwater
- Land purchase/lease for demonstration projects
- Agri-environment scheme / Farm Liaison (this is the main component)
- Biodiversity and site restoration
- Invasive Species Control
- Monitoring project impacts
- Public awareness and knowledge exchange
- Dissemination of results and outcomes

A Project Team will be appointed, made up of :

- Team Leader
- Farm Advisor
- Surface Water Officer
- Ground Water Officer
- Project Administrator and Community Admin Officer (LCCA)
- Plus others e.g. ecologists contracted for specific tasks

There are projects the LCCA may want to do that are not included in the LIFE project and these will be funded through other grants.

3. LawPro

The Directors asked the Secretary to contact Bernie White of Law Pro to request a non-technical update on the findings of the Water Catchment scientists for the Lough Carra catchment as this would be of great benefit now that the LIFE project is being established.

4. Solar Pump Systems

Joe Flannelly reported that the LCCA now owns several SPS systems. There are two in place as a pilot, one on land at Port Royal and the second one at Drum near Clogher and the remainder will be sited in the coming months.

Because this project is proving to be successful and expanding, it was agreed that a formal loan agreement should be set up between LCCA and the farmers where SPSs are installed. This document will be prepared in the coming weeks with some advice on content etc. Joe will prepare a document and bring to the next Directors’ meeting.

5. BioChar – IRBEA (Irish Bioenergy Association)

Joe Flannelly has been in contact with Sean Finan of the IRBEA who has repeated the offer to pursue the initiative “ Biochar Trial in remediation of lake water in Lough Carra”.

The Directors agreed that this would be a good initiative for the LCCA to follow up with the IRBEA and further agreed that Joe Flannelly should invite Sean Finan to a Directors meeting at the earliest opportunity in order to set this in motion.

6. Financial Report

Bank of Ireland €179.00
Credit Union €8,945.38

It was agreed that for 2021 going forward the LCCA would pay for the hosting and security certificate of the Lough Carra website www.loughcarra.org since this is now recognised as the Association’s website.

7. AGM

It was agreed that an AGM should be held in the near future. This will be organised once there is clarification on Covid guidelines for such meetings and once a suitable venue has been identified.

It was highlighted that 21 days notice of an AGM must be given by email and social media.

8. AOB

- **The Water Blitz** was a valuable experience because it highlighted what a sensitive environment Lough Carra is. We realised when we started to use them that the kits had a major drawback in that they were very crude measurements for a lake such as Lough Carra which is a marl lake with krustenstein. Cilian and Philip Doddy have shown that if the level of P is greater than 0.01 then this will be damaging for the krustenstein and other aspects of this unique environment. However,

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the lowest measurement level on the kits was 0.02 and so nowhere near sensitive enough. It was a valuable lesson in highlighting the sensitivity of the lake to those who took part.

On reporting this observation in a general email to LCCA members, Bernie White, leader of the LawPro scientists, responded with the following information : *“We had examined use of test strips in summer 2018 for use for our regional teams (when we were first getting set up), and had reached the same conclusions – i.e. in the Western region, they really are not sensitive enough, especially for marl or oligotrophic waters. I think continuous monitoring will be key and ye have that specified for in the Carra LIFE bid. However, our teams are currently testing the following more sophisticated kits:*

- *Hach DR900 pocket colorimeter (2), trialled by Midlands (Tullamore), South West (Cork) and Borders region.*
- *Palintest multimeter (2), one in the West and one in South West*
- *Primelab1 multimeter (1) for the South East (Kilkenny)”*

Bernie has said that they will keep us updated on progress in identifying suitable kits.

- **The Lough Carra Pond-dipping for schools programme** has started with the first school, Partry NS, taking part today. Two more schools will take part next week and a further 3 in September. The feedback so far is very positive. The equipment has been purchased with the Water Communities Grant.
- **A video on Lough Carra** has been produced, funded through the Heritage Officer of Mayo CoCo as part of the County Biodiversity Action Plan. A videographer was employed and Chris and Lynda Huxley supplied text treatment and some still images of Lough Carra. Chris and Lynda have donated their fee for doing this work to the LCCA. The video should be ready for release in the coming weeks.

END OF MEETING