



Iascach Intíre Éireann  
Inland Fisheries Ireland

# **BOARD OF INLAND FISHERIES IRELAND**

## **Meeting Report of February 16<sup>th</sup> & March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021**

This is the report of the meetings of the Board of IFI which took place in February and March 2021.  
This report provides an outline of agenda items raised at this meeting.

## **BOARD MEETING – February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

### **1. Welcome & Apologies**

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

### **2. Presentation 'Board Overview of Water Framework Directive (WFD) and roles– Dr Cathal Gallagher**

Dr. Gallagher briefed the members on the structures and agency responsibilities in relation to the delivery on Ireland's obligations under the Water Framework Directive (WFD). He outlined the significant resources which have been and the vast and accessible data collected by the agencies involved. He outlined IFI's role in enforcement and its responsibility in terms of hydromorphology (in particular barriers to fish). He informed the members that the organisation was in need of a hydromorphological expert and responded to questions on his presentation. Members thanked him for his comprehensive briefing.

### **3. Corporate Plan 2021-2025**

A copy of the draft Corporate Plan 2021-2025, the detail of which had been developed by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), was distributed with the meeting papers. Pat Millar of Clarion Consulting facilitated the detailed review of the draft strategy. P. Millar brought the Board through each line of the draft plan and took note of feedback provided under each High Level Objective. Clarification was provided by members of the Senior Management Team (SMT) in relation to motivations and descriptors, and the Board provided a rationale for any modifications it proposed. It was agreed by all that a critical aspect of delivery on the Corporate Plan was ensuring the organisational structure was developed to support it. Following robust discussion and feedback provided, **IFI's draft Corporate Plan 2021 – 2025**, was approved by the Board, pending the application of amendments.

### **4. AOB**

No matters were raised under AOB.

## **BOARD MEETING – March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021**

### **1. Welcome & Apologies / Declarations of Conflicts of Interest**

The Chair welcomed members and recently re-appointed member, Patrick Gibbons. In response to his request for declarations of conflicts of interest with matters on the agenda, one member declared an interest and it was agreed that they would leave the meeting for this item. No other conflicts of interest were declared.

### **2. Minutes of Previous Meetings**

The minutes and meeting report of the January 27<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved.

### **3. Matters Arising**

The CEO responded to a query in relation to the operational review of property in Connemara and agreed to revert with an update in due course.

### **4. Correspondence**

Correspondence with Lough Carra Catchment Association (LCCA) was noted and commented on in furthering a positive relationship with the organisation.

## 5. IFI Fish Farm

The CEO responded to queries in relation to options and acknowledged the Board's advice in relation to ensuring timely communication with both staff and stakeholders on any actions to be taken. The CEO confirmed that the necessary due diligence would be completed in advance of any proposed arrangement.

## 6. Climate Action Framework 2019-2021

A copy of the '*IFI Climate Action Framework 2019 – 2021*' update was distributed and noted by members.

## 7. CEO's Report

The CEO discussed matters raised in his meeting report: compliance with the Habitats Directive in terms of necessary environmental assessments; a presentation to be made on the Owenriff system; the BIK implications of the health and safety measure of staff taking vehicles home to avoid close contact at bases; the Seasonal Officer 2021 recruitment campaign; Galway City Council planning proposal; the progression of the formation of the next iteration of the National Inland Fisheries Forum and the progression of a study of the Corrib system.

## 8. Finance

P. Doherty and M. Martin were admitted to the meeting.

### Management Accounts December 2020

The 'Management Accounts and Executive Summary for December 2020' were distributed with the meeting papers. The Chair of the ARC confirmed that these accounts were reviewed by the committee at its meeting on February 10<sup>th</sup>. P. Doherty briefed members on the year-end balance at bank and implications of this.

### DRAFT Budget 2021

The draft '*Budget 2021*' and a 'Briefing Note: Operations Development Budget and Resources Summary' was distributed with the meeting papers. The ARC recommended the approval of the draft budget 2021. The Head of Finance provided the context for the setting of the draft budget and stated that the approach adopted was a 10% reduction on non-pay budget across all functions, with the exception of externally funded projects. He stated that a review of IFI's 77 cost centres will be conducted mid-year. S. Campion was admitted to the meeting to respond to queries in relation to IFI's Operations Development plans. Members discussed the strategic direction of the organisation and sought to ensure that this receives the necessary financial support.

Ms Campion responded to a concern expressed regarding workforce planning information availability. A discussion ensued on dual reporting, the geographical spread of staff and the impact of weather on the progress of development work and the necessity for contingency plans for staff whose development work is affected. S. Campion stated that project delivery will require the appropriate COVID advice and environmental conditions. There was no further input on the draft budget. The **draft budget 2021 as presented**, which would undergo a review following the publication of the corporate plan, was approved by the Board. S. Campion left the meeting.

### Seasonal Officers Recruitment

R. Bradley joined the meeting to respond to queries in relation to the proposed 2021 recruitment campaign. Ms. Bradley had provided a comprehensive presentation to the ARC on the proposed campaign with corresponding rationale. A discussion ensued on the positive impact of the seasonal recruitment on the permanent recruitment effort. The **2021 Seasonal Officer recruitment campaign** was approved by the Board. R. Bradley left the meeting.

#### Donegal Angling Tourism Association Pilot Scheme

This proposal was not approved by the Board and would be communicated to the organisation.

#### Lagarosiphon major Management Contract – L. Corrib

S. Campion and G. Forde joined the meeting. A briefing note titled '*Lagarosiphon Major Contract Costs/Conditions 2021*' was initially provided to the ARC for review and was distributed with the Board meeting papers. The Chair provided a brief historical account of management of this invasive weed since 2008 and the organisation's efforts in sourcing other sectoral input to funding its eradication. The Chair of the ARC provided a report on discussions with management at its meeting of February 10<sup>th</sup>. The ARC recommended the contract is agreed for a specific time period, with a review within the period. Following detailed discussion it was also agreed to ensure necessary environmental screening is completed and that the work is halted until the required regulations are satisfactorily met.

#### Capital Expenditure Appraisal CatchmentCare (Water Quality x 2 >€50k)

Two capital expenditure appraisal forms from IFI's Catchment Care project were submitted with the meeting papers.

Arney River Phase 1 - Riparian works (fencing, planting and livestock drinkers)

Roo River - Riparian works (fencing, planting and livestock drinkers)

This **capital expenditure** was approved by the Board.

#### L. Ree Draff Net Licence

A paper titled '*Lough Ree Commercial Draff Net Licence Applications 2021*' was distributed with the meeting papers. The Board approved that **licences are issued as required**. S. Campion and M. Martin left the meeting.

### **9. Management Assurance**

#### TETRA Value for Money Review

A paper titled '*Tetra Report 2021*' was distributed with the meeting papers. The Board discussed the importance of providing safety equipment to IFI staff and sought assurance that these resources were being used efficiently and effectively. The CEO outlined a number of incidents where TETRA was critical in a positive outcome. G. Forde left the meeting.

### **10. Audit & Risk Committee (ARC)**

#### Chair's Verbal Report of Meeting of February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021

B. Orbinski Burke provided a verbal report of this meeting on matters presented and reviewed by the committee. B. Beckett made a presentation on sustainable planning decision making by Local Authorities and An Bord Pleanála. A copy of the minutes of the ARC meeting of February 10<sup>th</sup> were issued and noted.

#### Internal Audit Programme

The ARC Chair provided a detailed overview of Internal Audit programme of reviews for 2021. The **Internal Audit Programme 2021** was agreed by the Board.

#### Annual Report of the ARC

The ARC Chair reviewed the contents of the 2021 Annual Report of the ARC in detail. This document supporting the Board's oversight of the organisation's system of internal controls was noted.

#### New Member of the ARC

**Prof. F. Lucy's appointment as a member of the ARC**, was approved.

## **Remaining Items under Finance for Consideration**

### Legal Tender

A briefing note on the legal services tender process was distributed with the meeting papers. The successful tenderer was Byrne Wallace for a period of 3 years. P. Doherty outlined the tender process and merits of this appointment. The members were satisfied with this presentation and **noted the appointment.**

### Bank Mandate

Due to changes in personnel, the **updating of signatories on IFI's bank mandate** were approved by the Board. P. Doherty left the meeting.

## **11. Property Sub-committee**

### Minutes of Meeting of January 25<sup>th</sup> and February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021

The Property Sub-committee minutes of the previous two meetings were noted by the members. The Chair of the sub-committee, M. McGreal, provided a verbal report of the February 8<sup>th</sup> meeting. RBD Director in the South West, S. Long, presented to the sub-committee on the Youghal fitout project.

## **12. Strategic HR Sub-committee**

Minutes of the Strategic HR Sub-committee meeting of January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021 were noted. A verbal report of this meeting was provided at the January 27<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

## **13. Risk Management**

### Corporate Risk Register 10.16

The Corporate Risk Register was distributed in the meeting papers and noted. With reference to text which had been added to Risk 4, members discussed the resourcing of the organisation which would benefit from clear accountability at all levels.

## **14. AOB**

No matters were raised under any other business.