



Iascach Intíre Éireann
Inland Fisheries Ireland

BOARD OF INLAND FISHERIES IRELAND

Meetings Report of November 18th and December 16th, 2021

This is the report of the meetings of the Board of IFI which took place in November and December 2021.
This report provides an outline of agenda items raised at these meetings.

BOARD MEETING – November 18th, 2021

1. OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. In response to the Chair's request for declarations of conflicts of interest with matters on the agenda, no conflicts of interest were declared.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

2.1 Board Meeting – October 20th, 2021 – Draft Minutes and Report

The **draft minutes of the meetings and meeting report** were approved pending the application of an agreed amendment.

2.2 Board Meeting – October 20th, 2021 – Resolutions and Status on Actions Arising

The resolutions listing and status on actions arising from the October Board meeting were noted.

2.3 Other Items of Note

2.3.1 & 2 Correspondence from stakeholders

Two items of correspondence from stakeholders in relation to the cessation of the Education & Outreach team initiative, were noted and a discussion ensued on IFI's continued provision of Education & Outreach activities through the Something Fishy programme, the Dublin Angling Initiative and other angling Initiatives). The CEO assured members the Education & Outreach Officer will continue working on these initiatives with RBD staff. He also confirmed that staff had been briefed and that the organisation was in the process of working with SIPTU on matters it has raised.

2.3 Climate Action Mandate Update October 2021

The '*Climate Action Mandate for October*' paper distributed with the papers was taken as read.

3. CEO'S REPORT

3.1 CEO's Report - October 2021

The '*CEO's Briefing Note to the Board for October 2021*', was distributed with the meeting papers and taken as read. The CEO briefed members on; the review of prosecutions in the Shannon River Basin District; payscale relativity with other governmental bodies; and the impact of the Mobile Support Unit on the protection effort and challenges in resourcing it. The CEO also updated members on matters arising since the issue of Board papers; IFI's national trailer service contract and the publicised call for applications for grants under the Salmon and Sea Trout Conservation and Protection Fund for 2022.

HR Sub-committee Report – November 11th

A verbal report of the November 11th meeting was provided by the Chair of the Strategic HR Sub-committee, Seamus Boland, which included the introduction of a welfare initiative and a discussion on organisational structure.

4. FINANCIAL SUMMARY PRESENTATION

4.1 Management Accounts and Executive Summary – September 2021

The '*Management Accounts and Executive Summary for September 2021*' were presented by Head of Finance and Energy Performance Officer, P. Doherty. Topics discussed were; funds held by the organisation; the outcome of a meeting between IFI and the Finance Division of the Department where revised the requirements for drawing down funding were raised; funding for weed control; insurance cover.

4.2 Q3 Financial Statements and Executive Summary - September 2021

The 'Quarter 3 Financial Statements and Executive Summary' were distributed with the meeting papers and noted.

5. VITAL FEW

5.1 Business Plan 2021-25

The 'Business Plan 2021 Q3 Update' was distributed in advance of the meeting and taken as read. Members provided feedback on the format and it was agreed that the document distributed is a very useful management tool and that it highlighted the overlaps in function demonstrating that the organisation was in transition. The CEO discussed the Western Lakes Management Plan.

Corporate Plan 2021-25 Verbal update

The CEO provided a verbal briefing on the staff launch of the 5-year plan.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT - UPDATE

6.1 Corporate Risk Register 10.21

The updated 'Corporate Risk Register 10.21' was distributed with the meeting papers and taken as read. The CEO responded to queries in relation to addressing risk which included data protection, the introduction of a new Bradan (License issuing system) and the implementation of the recommendations of ICT review. The CEO briefed the Board on the tender for the appointment of a Project Manager for the development of the Fish Farm.

7. STRATEGIC UPDATE – CEO's Presentation

Western Lakes Management Plan

A document titled 'Long Term Management Plan for Wild Brown Trout and Atlantic Salmon on the Great Western Lakes' was distributed with the meeting papers. Members provided feedback on the document; with the inclusion of the HLO's; IFI's conservation objectives and constraints (enhancing native fish stocks, invasive species control); reference to water quality; the involvement of stakeholders and the design of an action plan (with sub-plans) considering constraints identified. The Board also requested that maps of areas of focus and it was suggested to use SAC boundaries. It was also noted that any actions taken must be in harmony with the ecosystem. Concern was expressed as to the impact of jute matting on insect life in Lough Corrib. The CEO stated that the plan is a high-level plan based on good principles and catchment plans would be developed from this plan, where specialisation remained to be recruited.

8. BOARD COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS

8.1 Audit & Risk Committee Meeting – November 4th, 2021

The draft minutes of the ARC meeting of November 4th distributed with the meeting papers, were taken as read. The ARC Chair provided a verbal report of the meeting which dealt with internal audit reviews.

8.2 Strategic HR Sub-committee Meeting – November 11th, 2021

The Chair of the Committee presented the report of the November 11th meeting under item 3.

9. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

9.1 Proposed Access Project – Clonmacken Lake Slipway ShRBD

Members discussed the circumstances of the proposed project in detail, referring to the remit of Local Authorities, the good faith work of angling clubs and interest groups and considered the option of remitting funds to the DECC. The matter of match funding was also discussed. **The granting of funds to the Clonmacken Lake Slipway Project** was approved.

9.2 Sponsorship Programme – Proposed Grantees 2021

Subject to the clarification requested, the **recommended 2021/2022 Sponsorship Programme grants** were approved.

9.3 Permit Price Recommendations 2022

The **recommended Permit Price changes for 2022**, were approved.

9.4 Owenmore Fishery Catchment Management 5 Year Plan (SCF-21- 0123)

The **recommendation to develop a 5-year Catchment Management Plan**, was approved.

10. MANAGEMENT ASSURANCE

The following documents were distributed to members serving as assurance on activities undertaken as part of the delivery of the business plan for 2021.

10.1 Monthly Protection Plan Review – September 2021

The Monthly Protection Plan Review for September was noted by members.

10.2 Mobile Support Unit Protection Report – September 2021

The Mobile Support Unit Protection Report was noted by members.

11. AOB

A list of meeting dates for 2022 was distributed with the meeting papers

12. BOARD CHAIR SUMMARY

In closing the Chair invited members to discuss reporting of the delivery of strategy by management.

BOARD MEETING – December 16th, 2021

1. OPENING REMARKS

Chair welcomed members to the meeting and the immediately Board entered a private session.

Upon return from its private session the CEO was informed of a letter received by the Board regarding bullying, harassment and victimization in the organisation. The Chair expressed the concern, disappointment and upset shared by members regarding the content of this letter. The Board outlined the steps the Executive should take to address this and that it expected to be briefed on progress on the matter.

The Chair requested members to declare any conflicts of interest with matters on the agenda, two were declared (3.1 and 11.4 on the agenda) and it was agreed that members would recuse themselves when these matters are raised.

The Chair concluded his introduction by highlighting that the 2022 budget will need to clearly provide a budget for development, staff and projects if the Habitats Objective in the Corporate Plan is to be realised.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

2.1 Board Meeting – November 18th, 2021 – Draft Minutes

The draft minutes of the November meeting, incorporating the agreed amendment, were approved.

Matters raised by members included: the Mobile Response Unit; reporting of protection performance and development project delivery.

2.2 Board Meeting – November 18th, 2021 – Resolutions and Status on Actions Arising

The resolutions listing and status on actions arising from the November Board meeting were noted.

2.3 Other Items of Note

2.3.1 IFI Climate Action Mandate - October 2021

The '*Climate Action Mandate for October*' paper distributed with the papers was taken as read.

2.3.2 Windfarms in Fisheries Sensitive Catchments Combined Report

The '*Windfarms in Fisheries Sensitive Catchments Combined Report*' paper distributed with the papers was taken as read and welcomed as a significant management tool in this area.

2.3.3 Correspondence from Stakeholder

The topic of a Bye Law in relation to Arctic char was raised by stakeholder correspondence.

2.3.4 Connacht Tribune Article

An article from the Connacht Tribune distributed with the papers was taken as read.

3. CEO'S REPORT

3.1 CEO's Report - November 2021

The '*CEO's Briefing Note to the Board for November 2021*', was distributed with the meeting papers and taken as read. The following issues were raised.

Clarity was sought on the number of Education and Outreach staff that had moved to a different role within the organisation [point 14.6 in the CEO's Report] and assurance was sought on the recruitment process that was followed. The CEO confirmed that a number of the Education and Outreach team members applied for roles advertised and that appointments were made following a robust recruitment process.

Information was also sought regarding Aasleagh Lodge revenues. The CEO confirmed that the existing lease arrangement will be terminated as of the 30th of December.

A query was raised relating to the report on the development of eel management plans and possible steps by IFI to mitigate the mortalities. The CEO agreed that this was an issue of concern and informed the Board that he would be meeting the CEO of the ESB to discuss these concerns.

Concern was raised re the minimal sum of €276,000 allotted for barrier removal in 2002 (point 5.1 of the CEO's Report). The CEO stated that he had scheduled a meeting with the Department of Housing for January to discuss this matter and awaits clarity from our parent Department regarding IFI's future involvement in this fifty-year project, in terms of funding and staffing.

4. FINANCIAL SUMMARY PRESENTATION

4.1 Management Accounts and Executive Summary – October 2021

The '*Management Accounts and Executive Summary for October 2021*' were distributed with the meeting papers and taken as read. P. Doherty joined the meeting. He responded to queries in relation to material updates between issue of the report with the papers and the Board meeting.

P. Doherty discussed the reduction of IFI's cash balance and funding in relation to the development of the Fish Farm at Roscrea, IFI's pay bill and funds held for conservation purposes. P. Doherty responded to queries regarding car hire to date and confirmed that IFI is in the process of moving away from car hire.

4.2 Supplementary Pension Quarterly Report

The 'Supplementary Pension Quarterly Report' was distributed with the meeting papers and taken as read.

4.4 Striking on Fishery Rates for 2022

Fishery Rates for 2022 were approved.

4.5 Justification for Capital Expenditure ICPMS

Capital Expenditure on a new ICPMS instrument was approved.

4.6 Report on Insurance Cover

Following deliberations by the Board requested a further comprehensive paper on insurance cover.

4.7 Trailer Repair Tender Process

Concern was raised that this contract appeared to conflict with IFI's objective in relation to reducing carbon emissions because of the distance staff had to travel to carry out repairs. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the service provided under the current contract. The Executive agreed to provide responses to outstanding queries.

4.8.1 IFI 2020 Audited Financial Statements

The audited **2020 Financial Statements** were approved.

4.8.2 IFI 2020 Letter of Representation

The 2020 **Letter of Representation** was approved.

4.8.3 IFI Government and Internal Controls Statement 2020

The audited **Government and Internal Controls Statement for 2020** was approved.

5. VITAL FEW

5.1 'Western Lakes Management Plan - Verbal update

The Chair provided a verbal update on the 'Western Lakes Management Plan' and it was agreed to raise the matter with the Department in early 2022.

5.2 Recent Correspondence - Verbal update

The CEO provided a verbal briefing on recent correspondence.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT - UPDATE

6.1 Corporate Risk Register 10.21

The CEO reported that changes had been made by the Senior Management Team, which were reported to the ARC and feedback had been provided.

6.2 Reviewed Risk Management Policy & Procedure [DRAFT]

The draft reviewed **Risk Management Policy & Procedure** was approved.

7. STRATEGIC UPDATE – Presentation on Aasleagh Lodge by Consultants

Kevin O'Connor and his associates provided a presentation to the Board on Aasleagh Lodge and Erriff Fishery. Mr. O'Connor outlined the emerging concept for the proposal and briefed the Board on the opportunities that should be considered regarding the historical development of Aasleagh Lodge. Mr. O'Connor briefed the Board on the main points of the report that both he and his associates had conducted with regard to visitors & tourism, the environment and sustainability and how this proposal could potentially align with the objectives of IFI and the Corporate Plan.

8. BOARD COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS

8.1 Audit & Risk Committee Report (December 1st) - Verbal Update

The ARC Chair provided a verbal briefing regarding the December 1st ARC meeting. This briefing included updates in respect of internal audit reviews.

8.2 Strategic HR Sub Committee Meeting Report (December 13th) - Verbal Update

The Chair of the committee, Seamus Boland, provided a verbal report of the meeting. Updates in respect of; a software purchase proposal; the seasonal recruitment campaign and organisation development were raised.

9. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

9.1 Organisational Restructure and Workforce Plan

A document titled '*Organisational Restructure and Workforce Plan*', was distributed. The Board expressed satisfaction with the recommendations within the paper and the **Organisational Restructure and Workforce Plan**, was approved.

9.2 Review of Board Governance Policies

A document titled '*Review of Board Governance Policies [DRAFT]*', was distributed. The Board expressed satisfaction with this paper, and the **Review of Board Governance Policies** was approved.

9.3 Review of Board Expenses Policy & Procedure [DRAFT]

A document titled '*Review of Board Expenses Policy & Procedure [DRAFT]*', was distributed. The Board expressed satisfaction with this paper, and the **Review of Board Expenses Policy & Procedure [Draft]**, was approved.

10. MANAGEMENT ASSURANCE

The following documents were distributed to members to provide assurance on activities undertaken as part of the delivery of the business plan for 2021.

10.1 Monthly Protection Plan Review – October 2021

A document titled 'Monthly Protection Plan Review – October 2021' was distributed and noted by Board members.

10.2 Upper River Suck Development Plan

River Basin District Director, D. McInerney and Inspector O. Naughton joined the meeting and briefed Board members on the Upper River suck Development Plan.

11 AOB

11.1 Report on Insurance Cover in relation to RTI [December 2021, ARC Submission]

Following the discussion at the beginning of the meeting it was agreed to address queries raised at the next Board meeting.

11.2 Options for the future of Aasleagh Lodge and Cottages [November 2020]

A document titled '*Options for the future for Aasleagh Lodge and Cottages [November 2020]*', was distributed and noted by members.

11.3 Recruitment Business Case in relation to Seasonal Recruitment Numbers 2022

The recommendation **to proceed with the Seasonal Recruitment Campaign 2022** was approved.

11.4 Update on Judicial Review - December 2021

The responsibility that parties cover their own legal costs in relation to **the Judicial Review** was approved.

This concluded the business of the meeting.