

North South Ministerial Council  
Joint Secretariat



An Chomhairle Aireachta  
Thuaidh Theas  
An Chomhrúnaíocht

**PAPER NSMC WI 1 (13) JC**

**NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

**INLAND WATERWAYS MEETING**

**NSMC JOINT SECRETARIAT OFFICES,  
ARMAGH**

**19 JUNE 2013**

**JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ**

1. A North South Ministerial Council Inland Waterways meeting was held at the NSMC Joint Secretariat offices in Armagh on 19 June 2013. The meeting was attended by Carál Ní Chuilín MLA, Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, OFMDFM Junior Minister Jonathan Bell MLA, Jimmy Deenihan TD, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and Dinny McGinley TD, Minister of State with special responsibility for Gaeltacht Affairs. Minister Ní Chuilín chaired the meeting.

**PROGRESS REPORT**

2. The Council received a progress report from Mr John Martin, Chief Executive of Waterways Ireland on the work of Waterways Ireland including the following significant achievements:
  - (i) the provision of 368 metres of additional moorings;

- (ii) applications for the 2013 Sponsorship programme have been assessed, the successful applicants informed and the programme has commenced;
- (iii) maintenance of the waterways with 99.8% of waterways remaining open during the month of April; and
- (iv) the publications of “A Taste of the Waterways 2013” & “What’s On 2013”.

### **PRESENTATION ON WATERWAYS IRELANDS WEBSITE**

- 3. A presentation on Waterways Irelands new web-site was made by Mr Éanna Rowe, Head of Marketing and Communications. The presentation highlighted the benefits of the newly developed web-site, the first in Ireland to be hosted on SharePoint platform, and how it can be used to promote the waterways as a major tourist attraction in its own right and also as a valuable recreational and educational resource. The website enables users, individuals and businesses to do business online with the introduction of online forms and payments for services.

### **BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGETS 2012 AND 2013**

- 4. Ministers approved Waterways Ireland Business Plan for 2012 and recommended the Budget provision of €31.15m (£27.10m).
- 5. They also noted progress on the development of the 2013 Business Plan and budget. Following approval by Sponsor Departments and Finance Ministers the plan will be brought forward for approval at a future NSMC meeting.

### **ANNUAL REPORT AND DRAFT ACCOUNTS 2012**

- 6. The Council noted the Waterways Ireland Annual Report and Draft Accounts for 2012.

### **UPDATE ON THE RESTORATION OF THE UPPER LOUGH ERNE TO CLONES SECTION OF THE ULSTER CANAL**

- 7. The Council received a progress report on the restoration work for the Clones to Upper Lough Erne section of the Ulster Canal. It was noted that Cavan County Council, Clones Town Council and Monaghan County Council have granted planning permission and Fermanagh District Council has agreed the recommendation for approval and it is now approved by the Department of the Environment Planning Service.
- 8. Ministers noted that the Inter-Agency Group on the Ulster Canal set up to explore funding options for advancing the Ulster Canal project held its second meeting on 16 May 2013 and sponsor departments have agreed to examine the potential social benefits and leveraged funding opportunities in that context.

## **WATERWAYS IRELAND BOARD OPTIONS**

9. The Council noted the assessment of options presented by Sponsor Departments in relation to a Board for Waterways Ireland and the conclusion that the existing governance arrangements should be strengthened and that there is no requirement for the appointment of a Board at this time.
10. Ministers noted that Sponsor Departments will bring forward an update on governance arrangements to a future NSMC.

## **PROPERTY DISPOSALS**

11. The Council consented to a number of property disposals.

## **CEO RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

12. Ministers thanked John Martin for deferring his retirement to assist with the recruitment of his replacement and wished him well for the future.
13. Ministers appointed Dawn Livingstone to the post of Chief Executive of Waterways Ireland for a seven year contract, with effect from 29 July 2013 or the earliest possible date thereafter.

## **NEXT MEETING**

14. The Council agreed to meet again in Inland Waterways sectoral format in September 2013.

**Joint Secretariat**  
**19 June 2013**

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