



Iascach Intíre Éireann
Inland Fisheries Ireland

BOARD OF INLAND FISHERIES IRELAND

Meeting Report - 29 May 2024

This report provides an outline of agenda items raised at this meeting.

BOARD MEETING – 29 May 2024

1. STANDARD BUSINESS

1.1 Agenda Adoption /Conflicts of Interest Declaration/ Adherence to Confidentiality

The agenda was adopted with no conflicts of interest declared. The confidential nature of matters to be raised was agreed.

Apologies: Two apologies were received.

1.2 DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of 23 April 2024

Paper distributed: 1.2.1 DRAFT Meeting Minutes of IFI Board 23 April 2024

RESOLUTION: Approval of the draft **minutes of the 23 April 2024 Board meeting**

Matters Arising: There were no matters arising.

1.3 Board Meeting Actions Arising – 23 April 2024

Paper distributed: 1.3.1 Board Meetings Actions Arising;

Presenting: Deputy CEO

Paper were taken as read. The Deputy CEO briefed members on updates to agreed actions. Updates provided comprised: The Deputy CEO arranged a meeting with CEO of Marine Institute and actions agreed regarding Roscrea Farm.

1.5 CEO's Report/Main Board Report

Paper distributed: 1.5.1 Deputy CEO Report May Board Meeting 2024

Presenting: Deputy CEO

The Deputy CEO provided a briefing on the matters raised in the CEO's Report. The report presented is in the new format based on EY recommendations. New metrics are included.

The Deputy CEO confirmed that a NIFF policy paper was drafted and he provided an overview of the recent NIFF meeting.

The Deputy CEO provided a high level overview of the outcome of a recent WRC hearing (no identifiers). The Chair said there is a need to prioritise the appointment of permanent Head of HR.

The recent publication of a book co-authored by two current staff and one former staff member titled "Aquatic Plants in Ireland – A Photographic Guide" was noted. The Deputy CEO acknowledged the significant work of staff involved in preparing book which was carried out during their own time. The Chair commended the extraordinary achievement and noted the interest shown by Minister Ryan.

The NASCO meeting will take place from 2 to 7 June.

There was a discussion regarding the Examiner article on IFI of 12 May. All items raised in the article are historic and no new items were raised.

The Deputy CEO reported a meeting with the ESB Fishery Division to discuss funded research of eels in ESB catchments.

A detailed discussion ensued in relation to recent striking out of 2 court cases and it was agreed that the Executive explore both the option of Judicial Review or a case stated brought to the High Court and to confirm costs and update Board.

1.6 Finance Update

Paper distributed: 1.6.1 ARC Board Finance Report May 2024, Management Accounts & Q1 Financials

Presenting: Head of Finance and Corporate Services, Financial Controller

The Deputy ARC Chair and confirmed the Finance Report reviewed by ARC per the agenda.

1.7 Governance & Risk Update

Paper distributed: 1.7.1 ARC Board Governance and Risk Update

Presenting: Head of Finance and Corporate Services

Paper was taken as read. The Chair said the Governance Review Steering Group is working well and linking in with EY.

1.8 Sub-Committee Update

1.8.1 Audit & Risk Committee

Papers distributed: No papers were distributed.

This was taken under 1.6 above

Governance Review Steering Committee

Papers distributed: 1.8.2.1 IFI Board Induction Options Paper May 2024; 1.8.2.2 20240212_Gov Review Strng Grp Mtg Mins -12 Feb 2024_APPRVD_20 February 2024; 1.8.2.3 20240220_Gov Review Strng Grp Mtg Mins - 20 Feb 2024_APPRVD_04 March 2024; 1.8.2.4 20240304_Gov Review Strng Grp Mtg Mins - 4 Mar 2024_APPRVD_08 April 2024; 1.8.2.5 20240408_Gov Review Strng Grp Mtg Mins - 8 April 2024_APPRVD_13 May 2024

Presenting: Seamus Neely and Tom Barry, Implementation Support Team

Papers distributed were taken as read and noted. T. Barry and S. Neely joined the meeting and provided an overview of their appointment as section 18 appointees and the request by the DECC to remain to assist with EY implementation and work carried out to date. S. Neely noted that work is delayed but scheduled and there is a strong appetite within IFI to implement the recommendations.

S. Neely and T. Barry are working directly with SMT members to come up with practical solutions. Meetings are held monthly and individually as contacted by SMT. Work carried out by the committee throughout the year will help Board to sign off on SIC. S. Neely said there is a shared understanding of the resource issue, but implementation would need to be progressed.

A discussion ensued on presentation of information to the Board. The Chair suggested that the focus of S. Neely and T. Barry could be to look at the Senior Leadership Team and determine how that can be used to alleviate pressure on Senior Management Team

S. Campion provided an overview of the draft TORs for the Implementation Support Team (IST). The former Section 18 Appointees are now known as the IST. S. Campion provided detail of amounts contained in the 2024 budgets. The Chair said that the indicative salary was directed by DECC, and this would need to be reflected in TORs. The Chair said that 2 Board Members, S. Campion, S. Neely and T. Barry need to meet to agree remuneration and metrics for reporting on going forward. The Board noted the current TOR indicated no end of term reporting and that this would need to be included.

1.8.2 Corporate Plan Steering Group (CPSG)

Papers distributed: 1.8.3.1 Corporate Plan Steering Group (CPSG) Memo to Board; 1.8.3.2 DRAFT Corporate Plan Steering Group (CPSG) – ToR; 1.8.3.3 DRAFT Framework for crafting new Corporate Plan

These papers were taken as read. The CPSG Chair provided an overview of meetings to date. Matters raised comprised; the need for a project manager (PM) to support the strategy process; IFI's current Corporate Plan and horizon scanning. It was suggested that the Corporate Plan should be on the agenda for the Board and SMT meetings. It was confirmed that such a PM would be an experienced consultant from a firm with facilitation capacity. It was noted that staff would be informed that the process had commenced and that a staff group shall be set up. Workshops are planned to look at vision and mission.

RESOLUTION: The **Corporate Plan Drafting Framework** proposed by the CPSG was adopted.

IFI Board Induction Options

Papers distributed: 1.8.2.1 IFI Board Induction Options Paper May 2024

Presenting: Head of Finance and Corporate Services

A discussion took place regarding topics to be covered in the upcoming induction training.

1.9 National Inland Fisheries Forum

Papers distributed: 1.9.1 NIFF Meeting Minutes - 14th February 2024

Paper was taken as read and noted. This matter was discussed under 1.5 above.

1.10 Items for Approval

1.10.1 Capital Expenditure > €50k – Property – Youghal Base

Papers distributed: 1.10.1.1 Capital Request – Property – Youghal Base Fitout

Presenting: Head of Finance & Corporate Services

Paper were taken as read.

RESOLUTION: Approval of expenditure for the **fit out of Youghal Base** and shortfall in previous approval.

1.10.1 Capital Expenditure > €50k – Property – Enniscorthy Base

Papers distributed: 1.10.1.2 Capital Request – Property – Enniscorthy Acquisition Proposal

Presenting: Head of Finance & Corporate Services

This paper were taken as read.

RESOLUTION: Approval to place **offer for property acquisition**.

1.10.2 Capital Expenditure > €50k – Ops ICT – Fish Counter Programme Proposed Upgrade

Papers distributed: 1.10.2.1 Capital Request – Fish Counter Programme Proposed Upgrade

Presenting: Head of Finance & Corporate Services

This paper were taken as read.

RESOLUTION: Approval of expenditure for the **fish counter programme upgrade**.

1.10.2 Capital Expenditure > €50k – Ops ICT – Fishing Licence Management System

Papers distributed: 1.10.2.2 Capital Request – Ops ICT – Fishing Licence Management System

Presenting: Head of Finance & Corporate Services, Acting Head of IT

The Acting Head of IT provided an overview of the project with the rationale for implementation and costs to date. It was confirmed that procurement regulations were followed. It was confirmed that discussions with other state agencies/public bodies regarding similar applications had taken place. The Acting Head of ICT and the Head of Finance and Corporate Services responded to a number of questions and concerns raised agreeing that it is timely the system was updated to move from paper based and that the app for reporting on catches should to be prioritized, confirming that revenue from licences will cover the cost of annual system licence fee, that there would be efficiencies in terms of staff in RBDs through reduction in paperwork (~ 17,000 licences annually) and that the code would be owned by IFI including all developments. It was noted that there are some functions outside the scope of the current project noted in the Business Case. The Acting Head of ICT confirmed that these are future modules to be developed.

RESOLUTION: Approval of expenditure for and support the delivery of a new **Fishing Licence Management System**.

1.10.3 Sponsorship Programme – Proposed Awards

Papers distributed: 1.10.3 Sponsorship Programme – Proposed Awards 2024

Presenting: Head of Finance & Corporate Services

These papers were taken as read. The Board noted the small sums involved and the administration regarding same. S Campion agreed to review the amounts to the Defence Forces and Womens events look at budget and reallocate if possible, bearing in mind the work undertaken by the Evaluation Group and that a rationale would support any change.

MOTION: Approval of **recommendations of Sponsorship Evaluation Committee**

1.10.4 Cash Reserves Strategy

Paper distributed: 1.10.4 Updated Cash Reserves Strategy

Presenting: Head of Finance & Corporate Services

Paper was taken as read.

RESOLUTION: Approval of the updated **Cash Reserves Strategy**

1.10.5 Draft Terms of Reference IFI Support Team 2024

Paper distributed: 1.10.5 Draft Terms of Reference IFI Support Team 2024

Presenting: Deputy CEO

Paper was taken as read. Subject to amendment, it will be raised at the next Board meeting.

1.11 Items for Noting

1.11.1 Policy Improvement Implementation Plan - WRC

Paper Distributed: 1.11.1 Policy Improvement Implementation Plan arising from WRC Decision.
Paper was taken as read and noted by the Board.

1.11.2 Communication 2024 Media Sentiment

Papers Distributed: 1.11.2 Communication 2024 Media Sentiment

Presenting: Head of Finance & Corporate Services

This paper was taken as read and noted by the Board. The Board confirmed they wished to receive IFI media clippings. A discussion took place regarding producing a TV programme and the costs associated with the same of approximately €50,000. It was suggested that this was good value for money given the reach of such programmes and that IFI should investigate further. S. Campion agreed this would be looked into and taken into account in the 2025 budget.

1.11.3 Lough Ree Draff Net Fishery

Papers Distributed: 1.11.3 Legal Advice Note - Lough Ree Draff Net Fishery

Presenting: Head of Operations

The Board commented that this matter may need to go to the Attorney General. There would be a need to prove that activity has had a negative impact on fish stocks. Conservation measures were discussed. It was agreed any action taken would be supported by scientific grounds.

1.11.4 Midland Fisheries Permit

Papers Distributed: 1.11.4.1 Advice Note - Midland Fisheries Permit re Roscommon Co Co;

1.11.4.2 20240430_Roscommon Co Co – MFP Programme

Presenting: Head of Operations

This paper was taken as read and noted by the Board.

1.11.5 Monthly Protection & Operations Report

Paper Distributed: 1.11.5 Monthly Protection & Operations Report - March 2024

Presenting: Head of Operations

This paper was taken as read and noted by the Board.

1.11.6 Health & Safety Incident Investigation Procedure

Paper Distributed: 1.11.6 Health & Safety Incident Investigation Procedure

Presenting: Head of Finance & Corporate Services

This paper was taken as read and noted by the Board.

1.11.7 Prosecutions, Fines Issued and Fish Kills

Papers Distributed: 1.11.7 Action #02:04:24 - Prosecutions, Fines Issued and Fish Kills

Presenting: Head of Operations

This paper was taken as read and noted by the Board.

1.11.8 Impacts from Salmonid Aquaculture on Wild Salmonids

Papers Distributed: 1.11.8 Action #01:04:24 - Aquaculture Impacts

Presenting: Deputy CEO

This presentation was deferred to the next meeting.

Governance Plans

Papers Distributed: 5.1.1 Governance Year Planner Working Template

It was confirmed that the ARC reviewed the planner and was satisfied with content. Noted by the Board.

7. AOB

7.1 Draft Job Description for Head of HR

A draft job description for the Head of HR was circulated with the Board papers. The post is at Principal Officer grade, Point 1 of scale and will be advertised once approved. It was noted that there is no

reference to conflict management and performance management. It was agreed to amend the job description to include same and go to publication.

RESOLUTION: Approval of the **Head of Human Resources Job Description** pending amendment

7.2 EPA Grant

The Deputy CEO presented a proposal to apply for funding through the EPA funding call. The research outlined in the proposal will build on river restoration measures already planned by IFI through the Projects Office and will ensure adequate research resources (through hiring of 1*full time staff member) are available for the duration of the works. The main objective is to capture the benefits of large wood in the river ecosystem and encourage this restoration measure for future projects. The funding call was launched on 4 April and closes on 31 May.

RESOLUTION: Agreement to progress an application for funding to an EPA funding call, with a deadline of 31 May

8. Meeting of the Board without the Executive