

North South Ministerial Council
Joint Secretariat



An Chomhairle Aireachta
Thuaidh Theas
An Chomhrúnaíocht

PAPER NSMC WI 1 (15) JC

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

INLAND WATERWAYS MEETING

ULSTER-SCOTS AGENCY OFFICE, BELFAST

10 JUNE 2015

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The twenty second North South Ministerial Council Inland Waterways meeting was held in the Ulster Scots Agency, Headquarters, Belfast on 10 June 2015. The meeting was attended by Carál Ní Chuilín MLA, Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, and OFMDFM Junior Minister Michelle McIlveen MLA, Heather Humphreys TD, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Joe McHugh TD, Minister of State for Gaeltacht Affairs. Minister Ní Chuilín chaired the meeting.

PROGRESS REPORT

2. The Council received a progress report from Dawn Livingstone, Chief Executive of Waterways Ireland on the activities of Waterways Ireland including the following :
 - (i) Management and maintenance of waterways continued with over 99% of the waterways remaining open for navigation;

- (ii) Capital expenditure focused on major infrastructure repairs with replacement lock gates installed at Tarmonbarry on the Shannon and bridge repairs on the Grand Canal completed;
- (iii) Installation of floating moorings at Galloon and Knockninny on Lough Erne is proceeding;
- (iv) The Shannon Blueway won the Lakelands & Inland Waterways Sport Tourism Innovation Award at the Shannon Airport Sport Tourism European Summit;
- (v) 63 km of canoe trail with associated cycleways will be completed by the summer on the Shannon-Erne Waterway; and
- (vi) 106 events have been offered support under the 2015 Sponsorship Programme.

ACTION PLAN FOR GRAND CANAL AND SPENCER DOCK

3. Ministers considered the Action Plan for the Grand Canal Dock and Spencer Dock and agreed that Waterways Ireland proceed with its implementation subject to available resources.

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

4. The Council noted the progress to date on the restoration of the Ulster Canal from Upper Lough Erne to Castle Saunderson, Co. Cavan.

DEVELOPMENT OF A GREENWAY ALONG THE ROUTE OF THE ULSTER CANAL

5. Ministers approved the proposal to facilitate the development of a greenway along the route/linear corridor of the Ulster Canal from Castle Saunderson, Co. Cavan to Charlemont, Co. Armagh.
6. The Council also agreed to Waterways Ireland undertaking the role of lead partner on this project with the support of the relevant Councils and other stakeholders.

EU FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

7. Ministers noted the update on Waterways Ireland's work to maximise the benefit of EU Funding Opportunities.

APPROVAL TO MAKE AN ORDER UNDER ARTICLE 49 OF THE WATER (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 1999

8. The Council approved Waterways Ireland making an order to amend Lough Erne Bye-Laws in order to enhance Waterways Ireland's ability to manage the navigation effectively and ensure a safer waterway for all users.

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2013 AND ANNUAL REPORT AND DRAFT ACCOUNTS 2014

9. Ministers noted that Waterways Ireland Annual Report and Accounts 2013 were laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Houses of the Oireachtas on 11 March 2015. Waterways Ireland Annual Report and Draft Accounts 2014 have been submitted to the Comptrollers and Auditors General and following certification, will be laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Houses of the Oireachtas.

PROPERTY DISPOSALS

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

NEXT MEETING

11. The Council agreed to meet again in Inland Waterways sectoral format in November 2015.

**Joint Secretariat
10 June 2015**

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