

North South Ministerial Council
Joint Secretariat



An Chomhairle Aireachta
Thuaidh Theas
An Chomhrúnaíocht

PAPER NSMC WI 1 (12) JC

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

INLAND WATERWAYS MEETING

ENNISKILLEN

14 FEBRUARY 2012

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The fifteenth North South Ministerial Council Inland Waterways meeting was held at Waterways Ireland's headquarters in Enniskillen on Tuesday 14 February 2012.
2. The meeting was attended by Dinny McGinley TD, Minister of State with special responsibility for Gaeltacht Affairs, Carál Ní Chuilín MLA, Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure and OFMDFM Junior Minister Jonathan Bell MLA. Minister of State McGinley chaired the meeting.

PROGRESS REPORT

3. 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:
 - the provision of 862 metres of additional moorings in 2011 including 84 metres at Castle Hume, Co Fermanagh, 525 metres at Killaloe, Co Clare, 62 metres at Aghalane, Co Fermanagh and 191 metres at Terryglass, Co Tipperary ;

- completion of the 2011 Sponsorship Programme with over 63 events being sponsored across all navigations;
- the provision of three new publications to promote and support the use of the waterways;
- ongoing maintenance of the Waterways with 99.98% of waterways remaining open during the boating season;
- completion of a revised Marketing strategy; and
- provision of an agreement which enables Waterways Ireland to act as an agent for the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure to make prosecutions under article 53 of the Water (Northern Ireland) Order and Bye-Law No.19 of the Lough Erne Bye-Laws.

BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET 2012

4. The Council noted progress on the development of the Waterways Ireland 2012 Business Plan and Budget.

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

5. The Council received a progress report on restoration work for the Clones to Upper Lough Erne section of the Ulster Canal. Ministers noted that a formal planning application has been submitted to the relevant authorities in both jurisdictions in October 2011 and planning permission has been received from Cavan County Council. Monaghan County Council and Clones Town Council has sought further information from Waterways Ireland regarding the planning application. Waterways Ireland will present a paper for discussion to the next NSMC Inland Waterways meeting setting out options for advancing the Ulster Canal project.

ST. ANDREWS REVIEW – WATERWAYS IRELAND RECOMMENDATIONS

6. The Council considered four specific recommendations concerning Waterways Ireland and agreed to refer the following recommendations for endorsement to the June 2012 NSMC Plenary:
 - Sponsor departments to consider options around the setting up of a Board comprising less than twelve members and to present proposals for consideration at a future NSMC Inland Waterways meeting;

- Sponsor departments to implement as appropriate, through changes to the legislation or other administrative means, a de minimis provision for dealing with Waterways Ireland disposal of a waterway or part of a waterway;
- Sponsor Departments to review the current provisions in relation to Waterways Ireland's commercial activities to ensure that these are adequate and to report to a future NSMC Inland Waterways meeting; and
- taking account of the current economic and fiscal circumstances, no further action is taken at this time to extend the remit of Waterways Ireland.

PROPERTY DISPOSALS

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

NEXT MEETING

8. The Council agreed to hold its next Inland Waterways meeting in summer 2012.

**Joint Secretariat
14 February 2012**