

North South Ministerial Council
Joint Secretariat



An Chomhairle Aireachta
Thuaidh Theas
An Chomhrúnaíocht

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

INLAND WATERWAYS MEETING

NSMC JOINT SECRETARIAT OFFICES, ARMAGH

12 OCTOBER 2011

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The fourteenth North South Ministerial Council Inland Waterways meeting was held at the NSMC Joint Secretariat offices in Armagh on 12 October 2011. 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:
 - the provision of 609 metres of additional moorings and ongoing maintenance of the waterways;
 - the sponsorship of over 70 events to promote the awareness of the waterways across all navigations; and
 - the hosting by Waterways Ireland of a successful meeting of the Waterways Forward INTERREG IVC Project in Dublin and Enniskillen

which was attended by representatives from 17 organisations from 11 EU countries as well as Norway and Serbia.

BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET 2011 AND CORPORATE PLAN 2011-2013

3. The Council approved Waterways Ireland Corporate Plan 2011 – 2013 and Business Plan 2011 and recommended the budget provision of €35.18m (£28.85m) for 2011.

BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET 2012

4. The Council discussed the main priorities for Waterways Ireland in 2012 and reviewed progress in finalising the Business Plan and Budget 2012.

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

5. The Council received a progress report on the restoration work for the Clones to Upper Lough Erne section of the Ulster Canal. Ministers noted that the Strategic Environmental Assessment report and Plan documents are now completed and have been published and the Environmental Impact Assessment is completed. The site investigation work is ongoing. Meetings have been held by Waterways Ireland with all relevant statutory authorities to advise them on the project. Public meetings have also been held. Detailed drawings of the route and associated facilities have been completed. Planning notices were forwarded to land owners in Northern Ireland in week commencing 26 September 2011 and notices were placed on lands in Ireland in week commencing 3 October 2011
6. The formal planning applications will be submitted to the relevant authorities in both jurisdictions this month.

PROPERTY DISPOSALS

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

THE BENEFITS OF WATERWAYS

8. The Council received a presentation from Waterways Ireland on the future potential of Waterways. The presentation focused on the economic benefits of the waterways to the local community, recreation industry, tourism industry and the local and national economy.

NEXT MEETING

9. The Council agreed to hold its next Inland Waterways meeting in February 2012.

**Joint Secretariat
12 October 2011**