



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Water Advisory Body  
Friday 2 September 2022, 11.15am.**

**Venue:** Conference Room, Custom House.

**Attended by:**

Chairperson	Paul McGowan	
Members	Michelle Minihan	Dónal Purcell
	Martin Sisk	Miriam McDonald
Secretariat	Claire Gavin	Nason Fallon
	Valerie Longmore	

**1. Minutes of the previous meeting on 13 July 2022**

The Members agreed the minutes of the previous meeting, which will be published on the WAB website.

**2. Declaration of any conflict of interest**

There was no declaration of any conflict of interest.

**3. Discussion of meeting with Irish Water**

The WAB noted that the meeting today was an opportunity for a useful exchange of views. It is considered that Irish Water has been reactive, rather than proactive in its customer communications. The priority on technical issues to date has resulted in a reduced focus on customer communications. Internal cultural change may be required to ensure an equal focus on customer and technical issues. Irish Water acknowledged that it could do better. However, the WAB questions whether the importance of being customer-focused and

communicating with the customer in a timely fashion been understood across the organisation. However, it was noted that Irish Water is going in the right direction, the attitude of the utility has changed, senior management are putting a higher priority on customer communication, they have a more open approach now and are willing to accept feedback on their performance.

#### **4. WAB Quarterly Report No. 2 of 2022**

- Release of Report and media coverage

The WAB noted the good level of coverage the release of the no. 2 received, on national and local radio, online and in newspapers. FleishmanHillard noted that Michelle Minihan's availability to undertake interviews was greatly appreciated. It was noted that FleishmanHillard provided a good service in terms of PR and timing of the release of the Report on this occasion and the Secretariat advised that thanks have been expressed to them on behalf of the WAB.

- Irish Water Press Release on BWN in Batterstown, Co. Meath.

The WAB noted that Irish Water did not comment on this matter at today's meeting.

#### **5. WAB Quarterly Report No. 3 of 2022**

The cut off dates were agreed for the third Quarterly Report of 2022 – the data cut-off date is 16 September 2022 and the draft report cut-off date is 23 September 2022.

It was agreed that the CRU and the EPA would notify the Secretariat of the updated KPIs (which KPIs will be updated in next report based on data cut-off date) next week in advance of Q3 report, to facilitate the draft report and that this process would be added to the WAB Quarterly Secretariat procedures. It was noted that the third Quarterly Report would not contain significant new content, but that the fourth Quarterly Report would and so the PR focus should be on the Q4 Report. In that regard, January might be a good time for a Report to receive a good level of media coverage.

#### **6. Irish Water Regulatory Framework**

- Update on meeting with An Fóram Uisce (13 September 2022)

An update was provided on the arrangements for the meeting. The Chair will review the draft presentation prepared in June and arrange for its circulation to the Board in advance of the meeting.

### **7. Work Plan 2022 review**

The final Work Plan 2022 is to issue to the Chair for review and circulation.

The Work Plan for 2023 is to be considered, a new survey to be undertaken using existing questions and format to facilitate trend analysis and comparisons. The Secretariat will review the previous tender and contract and advise with regard to availability of the service provider.

### **8. Confirm next three meeting dates**

- Tuesday 13 September 2022 at 2pm (in person after the meeting with An Fóram Uisce).
- Tuesday 18 October 2022 (in person).
- Thursday 10 November 2022 at 10am (in person or online TBC).

The Secretariat will contact the new Assistant Secretary of the Department's Water Division and invite him to attend the October or November meeting. The CRU update on Scottish Water will be on the agenda for the October or November meeting.

### **9. Any Other Business (AOB)**

The Board asked the Secretariat to express it's thanks to Darren Browne for his excellent service and to wish him well in his new role.

The Chair advised that his term of office as Commissioner in the CRU will come to an end in February 2023 and consequently he would be leaving the WAB at that time. He has notified the Minister of the position.