



Ireland Wales Programme 2014-2020

Programme Monitoring Committee - Meeting 8
 Thursday 12th July 2018 11.15 a.m.
 Main Plenary Room, Holland House Hotel, Cardiff

		Papers
	11:00 – 11:15 Tea and Coffee on arrival	
1	11:15 – 11:20 Welcome, Opening and Introduction - Sioned Evans and Stephen Blair Joint Chairs	
2	11:20 – 11:30 Minutes of PMC Meeting 7 including Action Points – 23 November 2017 Swansea - Sioned Evans	IWPMC1420(08)01
3	11:30 – 11:45 EU Transition Update – Sioned Evans	Oral
4	11:45 – 11:50 Coffee Break	
5	11:50 - 12:05 Joint Secretariat Programme Update and Development Report - Linda Weaver	IWPMC1420(08)02
6	12:05 – 12:15 Communications Update – Jane McMillan	IWPMC1420(08)03
7	12:15 – 12:30 Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Update – Kathryn Helliwell	IWPMC1420(08)04
8	12:30 – 13:00 Project Presentation - CHERISH	
9	13:00 – 13:15 Any Other Business/Date of Next Meeting	
10	13:15 - Lunch	
	Close	

Ireland Wales Co-operation Programme 2014 – 2020

Meeting Minutes - PMC Meeting 8

Thursday 12th July 2018 – 11:15am

Main Plenary Room, Holland House Hotel, Cardiff



Agenda Item 1 – Welcome, Opening and Introduction

1. The Chair, Sioned Evans (SE), welcomed members and thanked those that had made the journey from Ireland. Stephen Blair (SB) was welcomed to his last PMC meeting before his imminent retirement.
2. Joint chair SB thanked members for attending and WEFO for hosting the meeting.
3. SE noted the meeting was quorate with the minimum number (13) of members present. She reminded members of the importance of attending meetings and asked that members stay for the duration of the meeting.
4. SE announced two new project approvals since the previous PMC meeting, these included funding for Catalyst (PA1 €1.35m ERDF) and Celtic Routes (PA3 €1.59m ERDF) bringing the level of commitment to €44 million.
5. SB noted that the IW programme was at a critical stage and that the aim was to get full commitment within the next six months.

Agenda Item 2 – Minutes of PMC Meeting 7 Including Action Points – 23rd of November 2017 Swansea

6. SE reviewed the draft minutes of PMC7 meeting. No comments or amendments were raised and the minutes were ratified as a true record of the meeting.
7. SE reviewed the action points from the previous PMC meeting:
 - **Action Point 23.11.2017/1 – members listed to provide further details regarding their conflict of interest relating to Ireland Wales Programmes projects that they are linked to.**
Not completed - JS to action.
 - **Action Point 23.11.2017/2 – LW confirmed that the minutes would be updated to reflect the reason for the withdrawal of the Joint Partners from the Exportable project.**
Completed

- **Action Point 23.11.2017/3** – JS to consider any potential cross over / confusion between Celtic Routes and Legendary Celtic Coasts project.
No longer relevant as Legendary Celtic Coasts has been rejected at PSC
- **Action Point 23.11.2017/4** – Jason Thomas to investigate further the possible links between Visit Wales’ twitter account and the Ireland Wales’ account.
The Joint Secretariat have been liaising with Visit Wales
- **Action Point 23.11.2017/5** – David Kelly/JS to secure replacements for the vacant positions on the PMC.
Good progress was reported with one outstanding vacant position on the PMC
- **Action Point 23.11.2017/6** – JS to re-tweet EU communication.
Completed

Agenda Item 3 – EU Transition Update

8. SE provided an update on EU transition from a Welsh Government perspective, noting the heightened potential for a no-deal outcome and the growing doubt about the likelihood of a transition period. From a WEFO perspective, the intention was to plan for both a deal and a no deal scenario by aiming for full programme commitment by the end of March 2019. This would ensure projects would either be covered by the transition period or the Treasury guarantee in the event of a no-deal. SE noted further clarity was needed on the guarantee and further discussions were taking place with the Treasury to ensure flexibility for the management of the Programme post March 2019. In addition concerns had been raised over the implication that projects between public bodies i.e. public to public would be covered. All of the Devolved Administrations (DA’s) are pressing the Treasury to clarify the cover of the guarantee with discussions currently ongoing.
9. Members queried the depth and breadth of the guarantee raising specific concerns about the impact on local authority engagement in projects and implications on local authority budgets if public bodies were not covered by the guarantee, the extent to which TA projects would be covered, the practicalities of funding streams to Welsh and Irish organisations under the programme and WEFO’s status as managing authority in the event of a no-deal. SE gave assurances that discussions on these issues were ongoing and the WG, together with other DAs, was seeking urgent clarity to understand better what contingency planning to put in place. Members noted the ongoing level of uncertainty presented a risk to the programme overall and asked that it be noted on the risk register for the programme. The MA acknowledged this position and agreed to consider making the risk register available to members as a paper to note.

Action Point 12.07.18/1 – MA to consider sharing Risk register with PMC members

10. SE stressed that Welsh Government Ministers recognised the importance of the relationship between Ireland and Wales, including the level of trade between the two countries and they are committed to supporting this co-operation into the future. In Wales, engagement and consultation regarding regional investment in Wales post Brexit is ongoing and the ongoing commitment to the Ireland Wales cross border programme and also to ETC more generally, has been embedded within this.
11. SB noted that the draft EU Regulations for the next round of programme were setting out that maritime co-operation will move from Strand A to Strand B (transnational) so for a future programme, geographical coverage could potentially be affected.
12. DPER noted the positive co-operation and excellent relationships that have been established between Ireland and Wales. Whilst the Irish Government would like to see a future programme they acknowledged the need to consider future options in light of published regulations and the impact these might have on the shape and opportunities for future programmes.

Agenda Item 5 – Joint Secretariat Programme Update and Development Report

13. LW reviewed the JS programme report highlighting key messages and updating members with the latest information:
 - STREAM has recently been approved via the PSC portal taking the total commitment level to €48m and 61%
 - All PA3 projects in Business Planning will go to the PSC in November
 - ECHOES has recently been invited into Business Planning, realising a theoretical over-commitment for PA2 of £600k
 - The Commission stressed the importance of pace of claim submission and spend as there are financial targets to meet for the 2018 performance framework.
 - It was felt that the indicators for PA2 and PA3 only had soft outputs which didn't lend themselves to demonstrating the real impact on the ground that the operations were having. The MA noted that projects undertake their own evaluations and information received from these could be explored and reported to the PMC.

Action Point 12.07.18/2 – JS will consider provision of an update on the impact of funding at future PMC meetings.

14. Chriss O'Connell will work with the MA to explore a reporting mechanism for cross-cutting themes that can be presented to the PMC.

15. Members were pleased to note good progress particularly under PA3.
16. In response to a query on the appetite of the MA to over-commit, members were advised that this has been the subject of discussion within WEFO. The MA noted that to have a better chance of achieving maximum spend the Programme would have to over-commit which would also require IE Govt. support.
17. Referring to the Performance Framework, the Commission mentioned there could be a suspension of payments if programme milestones were not achieved. It was important that the MA/JS communicated regularly with the Desk officer on this matter; as things stood, there was a strong possibility that the programme will not meet its PA3 milestones and this should be discussed in the autumn. There is potential to undertake a programme modification to reset mid-term targets before the end of the year; however this would require justification.

Agenda Item 6 – Communications Update

18. The MA invited members to note the communication paper and confirmed that the programme is making good progress utilising Facebook, twitter and other social media to promote the programme and projects. There are positive statistics within the paper setting out what has been achieved to date and plans going forward. The MA noted that the IW programme receives far more media attention than the mainstream programmes.

Agenda Item 7 – Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Update

19. Kathryn Helliwell (KH) introduced the paper and explained that the original monitoring and evaluation strategy for the IW Programme had been closely aligned to the mainstream strategy; the update provided today has been appropriately tailored.
20. KH highlighted the proposed amendments to the strategy document, with two key changes – the first being a delay to the evaluation of the programme by a year. The mid term evaluation would start this year and the second change concerns the timing of the final evaluation which will be undertaken in 2021.
21. There are no changes to the evaluation questions, but the approach on how these are being addressed has been tweaked.
22. There will be a steering group set up for the evaluation which will include representatives from DPER and SRA.
23. KH confirmed that the indicators contained within the M&E strategy are fixed and cannot be amended. These are the indicators that the MA will need to report on in the next Annual Implementation Report.
24. WEFO will also be gathering qualitative information.

25. SE stated that the wording within the document would be revisited by the strategy team and a revised document would be circulated for decision via written procedure.

Action Point 12.7.18/3 – A revised M&E Strategy will be circulated to members via written procedure for review and approval.

Agenda Item 8 – Project Presentation – CHERISH

26. SE welcomed Clare Burgess, Sarah Davies and Louise Barker from the CHERISH operation who provided a visual presentation of their operation.

Agenda Item 9 – Any Other Business

27. SE thanked SB for his 18 years of dedication to the Ireland Wales programme, his commitment to co-operation and effective delivery throughout the span of three Ireland Wales programmes. SE wished SB every success for the future.

28. SE thanked all present for their positive engagement and closed the meeting.

Annex 1

Attendees:

Dr Alastair Davies – Department of Innovation, Welsh Government
Jason Thomas – Department for Culture, Sport and Tourism, Welsh Government
David Lettelier – Natural Resources Wales
Councillor Phil Baker – Welsh Local Government Association South Wales
Councillor Ronnie Hughes – Welsh Local Government Association North Wales
Jessica Williams – Wales Council for Voluntary
Prof Richard Davies – Higher Education Wales, Swansea University
Chriss O’Connell – Welsh Government Equal Opportunities
Barbara Burchell – Welsh Local Government Association North Wales – Observer
Gwyn Evans – Welsh Local Government Association South Wales – Observer
Sean O’Connor – Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
Councillor Pip Breen – South Regional Assembly Council
Councillor Pamela Kearns – Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly Council
Hugh O’Reilly – WHEEL
Dave Corcoran – Dept. of Communications, Climate Action and Environment Siobhan
O’Higgins – Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Lorna O’Brien - Department of Public Expenditure and Reform – Observer
Cllr Pamela Kearns (East & Midlands Regional Assembly) alternate for Cllr Brian McDonagh.

WEFO

Sioned Evans – Chief Executive WEFO
Jane McMillan, Managing Authority WEFO
Linda Weaver, Head of Joint Secretariat
Patrick Lilly, Joint Secretariat (Ireland Wales Operations Officer)
Bethan Thomas, Joint Secretariat (Ireland Wales Operations Officer)

Southern Regional Assembly

Stephen Blair - Director
David Kelly – Assistant Director
Breda Curran (SRA, Ireland Wales Operations Officer)
Marie Harnett

EU Desk Officer

Marianne Van De Vorle

Apologies:

Wales

Lucy Corfield – Dept. for Natural Resources Wales
Des Clifford – Office of the First Minister and Cabinet Office
Andy Richards – Wales TUC
Jessica Williams

Ireland

Jonathan Earl – Chambers Ireland – Unable to make it due to holiday commitments Sarah
Clarke – Irish Congress of Trade Unions
Stewart Roche – Higher Education Ireland
Niall McDonough – The Marine Institute
Labhaoise McKenna – Observer