

**MINUTES OF 149th MEETING OF THE DRAINAGE COUNCIL FOR NORTHERN
IRELAND HELD AT 10.30am ON THURSDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2010
AT THE MAGHERABUOY HOUSE HOTEL, PORTRUSH**

Present:

Mr G Crawford (Chairman)
Alderman R Beggs
Councillor A Rainey
Councillor J McBriar
Councillor M Gillespie
Councillor O Hughes
Councillor S Clarke
Councillor W King
Dr H Johnston
Mr J Clarke
Mr R Cummings
Mr T Clarke
Mr T Hinds
Ms R Dobbin

In Attendance:

Mr J Glass (Secretary)
Mr A McIlroy
Mr D Nixon
Mr P Aldridge
Mr P Mehaffey

1. INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed all those present to the 149th meeting of the Drainage Council.

The Chairman went on to extend special welcome to Ms Rosemary Dobbin, Mr Trevor Hinds, Councillor Alan Rainey, and Councillor Sean Clarke, who had been successful in the recent public appointment process carried out to fill vacancies on the Council until 2011.

The Chairman then invited the Secretary to offer any apologies that had been received.

2. APOLOGIES

The Secretary advised that apologies had been received from Councillor A Graham, Alderman H Nicholl, and Councillor G McHugh.

3. MINUTES OF 148th MEETING

The Chairman asked if members agreed that the minutes of the last meeting were an accurate record.

On the proposal of Alderman Beggs, seconded by Councillor Hughes, the minutes were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

4. MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman asked Mr Cummings if he was content that he had received a copy of the consultation papers relating to the transposition of the EU Floods Directive as requested at the previous meeting. Mr Cummings confirmed that he had received the papers and was content – Action Point on Page 10 of the previous minutes refers.

The Chairman then asked Mr Aldridge to address the Council.

5. UPDATE ON MAJOR WORKS PROGRAMME

Mr Aldridge presented the details of the Major Works Programme being undertaken by the Rivers Agency, using a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation to indicate the geographical location and details of completed, current and proposed works and schemes including photographs for illustration.

5.1 Culvert Renovation Works completed since the last meeting

Dundonald – Ferndene Stream;
Belfast – Mount Vernon Stream;
Belfast – Rochester Avenue Stream.

Mr Aldridge provided a short summary of each of the works listed, including the reasons for the works, outline of the works with photographs and maps for illustration, and the costs and benefits.

5.2 Culvert Renovation Works currently proposed

Banbridge – Brookfield Stream;
Antrim – Steeple Burn, Holm Factory Drain, and Springfarm;
Keady – St Patrick’s Street.

Again Mr Aldridge provided a short summary of the works listed detailing the reasons for the works, an outline of the detailed works involved, and the costs and benefits.

Mr Aldridge then concluded this section by providing the Council with an overall tabular summary of the culvert renovation works being undertaken by the Rivers Agency.

5.3 Feasibility Studies recently completed

Ahoghill – Village Stream;
Annaclone – Cappagh Mill Burn;
Belfast – East Belfast Drainage Study;
Ballinderry – Brackagh Burn & Ballinderry Millrace;
Ballygawley – Ballygawley Flood Alleviation Scheme including St Ciaran’s School;
Coalisland – Coalisland Millrace;
Doagh – Doagh River;
Parkgate – Fourmile Burn;
Whiteabbey – Concrete Row.

5.4 Schemes Undergoing Feasibility Study

Annesborough;
Belfast – Lucerne Parade;
Belfast – Finaghy, Ashton Park;
Beragh – Cloughfin River;
Banbridge – Showground Stream;
Dromara – Lagan;
Drumaness;
Glengormley – Collinward Stream;
Kilkeel – Cranfield, Whitewater;
Laurelvale – Laurelvale Stream;
Lurgan – Halfpenny River and Tirsogue Drain;
Maghera Co. Down;
Magheralin – Ballymacaine Stream;
Mallusk – Blackwater/Ballymartin;
Markethill – Bryandrum Stream;
Newtownabbey – Collinbridge;
Paint Condition Survey at Cutts and Portna Sluices;
Portadown – Blackerburn;
Rostrevor;
Sixmilewater River;
Whiteabbey – Concrete Row, Threemile Water, and Greenisland Stream.

5.5 Schemes Recently Completed

Portrush – Tar Burn;
Belfast – Blackstaff River at Whiterock and Glen Road.

5.6 Schemes Currently Undergoing Construction

Carrickfergus – Sullatober Water Phase 1.

5.7 Proposed Schemes (To commence in 2010/2011 financial year)

Coleraine – Lodge Burn.

5.8 Schemes Currently Undergoing Design

Belfast – Loop River Phase 1, Knock and Connswater Rivers, Loop River Phase 2;
Carrickfergus – Sullatober Water Phase II;
Coleraine – Lodge Burn;
Limavady – River Roe;
Magherafelt - North West Drainage;
Omagh – Hunter Crescent, Johnston Stream II.

The Chairman thanked Mr Aldridge for his presentation, and invited members to raise any points or questions they might have.

Alderman Beggs asked if Mr Aldridge could expand on the works being undertaken at Parkgate. He enquired if this work was being undertaken at a bridge crossing over the river. Mr Aldridge confirmed that the work was intended to remove gravel from the vicinity of the bridge to reduce the risk of it forming a blockage.

Mr Cummings commented on the amount of money being spent on two capital schemes included in Mr Aldridge's presentation. He raised concerns that this would leave little funds available for works to be carried out elsewhere.

Mr Aldridge agreed with Mr Cummings, and explained that at the time the budgets were prepared Rivers Agency received sufficient levels of funding to support the capital works required. However, Mr Aldridge made the point that as a result of the major flooding events of June 2007 and August 2008 necessary investigatory works and potential for flood defence schemes had increased dramatically. Mr Aldridge advised the Council that Rivers Agency was doing everything possible to secure additional funding to address the increase in demand, but that for the moment the Agency could only work within its capacity and funding levels.

Mr Cummings asked if there were plans for capital works in the west of the province. Mr Aldridge answered that, whilst the Agency would address difficulties across the country as necessary, the major flood risks were presently focused in Belfast. Mr Aldridge expanded that over the years the Agency had carried out many schemes in the west of the country, but that at the present time effort had to be put into addressing the serious flood risk in Belfast.

Mr Cummings voiced his hope that pressure from the public could assist in releasing the necessary funding. Mr Aldridge reinforced that the Agency had done everything possible and presented their case for additional funding in line with guidelines.

Councillor King raised a query in relation to the Lodge Burn scheme, and asked if the proposals involved the entire length of the Burn. Mr Aldridge confirmed that the current proposals were for phase I of a larger scheme and would focus on the length of the Burn affecting Coleraine town centre. Councillor King then queried if there were any plans for the upper stretches of the Burn. Mr Aldridge advised that there was potential for future works on the upper stretches if the need arose from development, but that at the present time there were no definite plans.

Alderman Beggs voiced his concern with regard to developers gaining from drainage works carried out at public expense to enable development. He asked if plans to acquire contributions from developers towards the costs of drainage works associated with development had been advanced. Mr Aldridge informed the Council that the issue of drainage infrastructure charging (DIC) remained ongoing, and was being considered as part of a wider planning reform programme being progressed by the Department of the Environment.

Mr T Clarke confirmed that DIC was being considered as part of the planning reform, but stated that no definite decisions had yet been taken. Mr Mehaffey added that Rivers Agency had attempted to resolve the issue of DIC but had found it to be extremely complex and difficult from a drainage perspective; he stated that the Agency was awaiting the outcome of the Planning Service initiative into the matter.

Mr Aldridge emphasised that Rivers Agency was the most appropriate body to install drainage infrastructure for new development. He agreed with Alderman Beggs that the developer should

be expected to contribute towards the cost of this, and confirmed for the Council that the intention was to move towards the goal of achieving this.

Councillor Rainey thanked the Chairman for his welcome and stated that he was very much looking forward to working as part of the Council. Councillor Rainey then asked if Mr Aldridge could advise of the timetables for completion of ongoing studies, in particular those in Beragh and Omagh. Mr Aldridge stated that the study into Beragh was virtually complete with the final stages underway.

Councillor Rainey then asked about the possibility of a scheme progressing as a result of the findings. Mr Aldridge advised Councillor Rainey that Rivers Agency staff were still considering the results of the study and that all efforts would be made to secure the necessary funding for a flood defence scheme if one was deemed viable. Mr Aldridge went on to advise Councillor Rainey that a flood defence scheme for the Hunters Crescent and Johnston Park area of Omagh was in the design stage, and would be included in the capital works programme for progression in the 2010 – 2011 financial year.

Mr J Clarke highlighted the economic pressure for funding being felt across the Northern Ireland Civil Service and stressed that Rivers Agency was doing everything possible to secure funding for important flood defence works. He explained that public awareness of flooding and the damage caused had risen dramatically since 2007, and that as a result the public were becoming more active in the call for greater investment in flood risk mitigation measures across government.

Ms Dobbin asked if a piecemeal approach to flood risk was being taken or if plans for greater coordination amongst Departments involved were being pursued. Mr Aldridge stated that the European Floods Directive required joined up thinking towards flood risk management across member states. He advised that, as the competent Authority for the implementation of the Floods Directive in Northern Ireland, Rivers Agency was progressing the important work involved including the creation of close working relationships with other government bodies involved in flood risk management.

Mr Hinds asked if the European Floods Directive would involve the possibility of additional funding being made available from Europe. Mr Aldridge advised that, whilst additional funding was potentially available, Northern Ireland did not qualify as disadvantaged and therefore would not be entitled to apply. Mr Aldridge clarified that across the European Union approximately twenty five billion pounds worth of damage had been caused by flooding over several years including the loss of over one hundred lives, and that in this context Northern Ireland was in a relatively good position with regard to flood risk. The Chairman referred to recent flooding in Madeira and stated that the devastating scenes reported there certainly went some way to putting local matters into perspective.

Councillor Clarke thanked the Chairman for his welcome to the Council. He then enquired about planning and voiced the public perception that many of the properties that were flooded during August 2008 should not have been granted permission to be built in close proximity to watercourses. Councillor Clarke asked about the provisions in place for drainage matters relating to proposed development in close proximity to watercourses. Furthermore, he also stated his belief that deforestation played a key role in the increased flood risk in the west of the province. Councillor Clarke urged Rivers Agency to consider reforestation and soft engineering options for flood defence measures.

Mr Mehaffey advised Councillor Clarke that Rivers Agency and Planning Service were in complete agreement regarding the need to ensure the avoidance of flood risk. He stated that flood risk was considered both through use of the Strategic Flood Map and direct consultation with Rivers Agency at the planning stage of significant developments. Mr Mehaffey also highlighted Planning Policy Statement 15 (PPS 15) which relates specifically to avoidance of development on flood plains.

Mr Mehaffey went on to consider the August 2008 flooding event and the exceptional nature of the weather conditions that led to the flooding. He explained that across the country many areas experienced events that greatly exceeded the standard Q100 level that flood defences are designed to, and therefore many defences were overtopped. Mr Mehaffey stressed how exceptional the conditions were that caused this and also cited grille blockages as a contributing factor to the scale of the event. He assured the Council that Rivers Agency staff did everything possible to minimise the risk of blockages and deal with any that arose as quickly as possible.

Councillor Clarke then stated his belief that the design of some modern developments increased the risk of surface water flooding. Mr Mehaffey answered that the Rivers Agency did everything possible at the consultation stage to encourage developers to consider sustainable urban drainage systems as much as possible. Mr Aldridge added that with the work involved with the EU Floods Directive there was an increasing interest in surface water flooding and the options available to reduce the risk. He emphasised that these risks were being included when planning applications were under consideration by Rivers Agency. Mr Aldridge repeated that this, along with many flooding issues, entailed a joined up approach across government as required by the EU Floods Directive.

Councillor Clarke asked if Planning Service were also on board with this line of thinking. Mr Aldridge confirmed that Planning Service was in agreement with this approach and worked closely with Rivers Agency on these issues. Councillor Clarke then asked what the Drainage Council could do to reduce surface water flooding. Mr Aldridge explained that if the surface water flooding did not originate from a watercourse or the sea it was not a matter for the Drainage Council to consider, but was being looked at by Rivers Agency in line with the Floods Directive.

Mr J Clarke clarified for the Council that Rivers Agency has responsibility for the management of flood risk originating from watercourses and the sea and that matters relating to other types of flooding would not necessarily be for the Drainage Council to consider. He stated that in the future it was possible that a body could be set up to deal with all types of flooding, but that at present Rivers Agency only dealt with watercourses and the sea.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions before inviting Mr Mehaffey to address the Council.

6. FLOODING REPORT

Mr Mehaffey presented the flooding report to the Council. He described three flooding events that had occurred since the October meeting of the Drainage Council, one minor event on 1 November 2009, one minor event on 5 November 2009, and one significant event during November and December 2009. Mr Mehaffey went on to provide some more details of each of

these events to the Council, and began by discussing the minor flooding event of 1 November 2009.

He explained that this event affected mostly the west, County Armagh and South Down with 137 calls being received directly by the Rivers Agency and 121 calls by the Flooding Incident Line. Mr Mehaffey was able to confirm for the Council that 108 incidents were responded to with 160 members of Rivers Agency staff deployed. Furthermore Mr Mehaffey advised that 2 commercial properties flooded at Newry and Jonesborough, 1 domestic property flooded at Bessbrook, and 9 garages flooded at Newry, Richill and Castlederg.

Mr Mehaffey then outlined the minor flooding event of 5 November 2009 that affected Magheramason. He stated that during this event 19 calls were received directly by the Rivers Agency with 8 properties affected following blockage to a grille.

Mr Mehaffey went on to spend some time detailing the significant event of November/December 2009 that affected areas across County Fermanagh. He provided a detailed background into the Erne waterway system and the legislation relevant to the management of the water levels of both Upper and Lower Lough Erne. Mr Mehaffey explained the operational mechanisms by which the Lough levels are controlled and the steps that were taken by the Rivers Agency and their colleagues in the Electricity Supply Board in the Republic of Ireland in an attempt to reduce the risk of flooding as far as possible.

Mr Mehaffey concluded his presentation by presenting the Council with a break down of the exceptional weather conditions that led to the extensive flooding experienced and highlighting some of the worst affected areas.

The Chairman thanked Mr Mehaffey for his presentation of the flooding report and complimented the Rivers Agency on their performance. He then asked if members had any questions or comments.

Councillor Rainey thanked Mr Mehaffey for his presentation and complimented him on the clarity contained therein. Councillor Rainey then asked for a copy of the presentation and stated his belief that it would be very useful in clarifying for District Councils and others what actually happened. He continued by asking if Mr Mehaffey felt that dredging or other forms of maintenance work could help reduce the risk of flooding in the Erne system.

Mr Mehaffey answered that the possibility of carrying out dredging and other maintenance works had been considered, but had been found to be ineffective when dealing with a system as large as the Erne system. Mr Mehaffey continued that it was very important for Rivers Agency to provide as much clarity as possible to the public on the Erne system and the factors involved in the flooding experienced. He expanded that Rivers Agency had in the past provided presentations to Fermanagh District Council and other involved parties and was now actively considering possible options to increase awareness in the community.

Mr Mehaffey gave the example of the production of an educational booklet in conjunction with the Western Education and Library Board (WELB) and emphasised that Rivers Agency was keen to get involved and raise awareness in the community as much as possible.

Councillor Clarke also thanked Mr Mehaffey for his presentation and then asked if it was possible to move the water through the dam at the Cliff power station more rapidly to stop the

backflow along the upstream river. Mr Mehaffey responded that the power station at Cliff had been built on the site of natural falls and was able to channel massive quantities of water through its spillways. He explained that the outlet that conveyed water to the power station only had a certain carrying capacity and that even though the power station was more than capable of spilling all the water that arrived, the channel could only carry a certain amount at any one time. Mr Mehaffey assured the Council that the stations and dams were as efficient as it was possible to be.

Mr Cummings advised the Council that a number of members of the Ulster Farmers Union had provided feedback to him on the flooding and had stated that, whilst they had lost a considerable amount of land and some livestock, they were pleased with the efforts of Rivers Agency staff that had done everything possible to assist.

Alderman Beggs complimented Mr Mehaffey on an excellent presentation and extended his sympathies to the communities adversely affected by the severe flooding across County Fermanagh. He underlined the Drainage Councils appreciation of the swift actions of the Rivers Agency staff that did everything possible to limit the damage as much as possible. Alderman Beggs then advised the Council that he was aware of much worse damage being done further south.

Mr Mehaffey confirmed that the damage experienced further south along the Erne/Shannon system had been much more severe as reported by Rivers Agency counterparts from the Office of Public Works in Dublin. Mr Mehaffey put on record his tribute to the Rivers Agency staff, whose efforts had helped keep damage to a minimum. The Chairman added his appreciation for the work carried out by Rivers Agency staff as he had also heard of the extreme situation further south. He asked that the thanks of the Drainage Council be conveyed to the Rivers Agency staff involved.

Mr J Clarke advised the Council that he would ensure that the thanks of the Council were passed to the staff involved and the Flooding Taskforce set up to look into the flooding in County Fermanagh. Mr J Clarke also confirmed for the Council that Mr Mehaffey's presentation on the Erne System would be made available on the Rivers Agency website as soon as the Flooding Taskforce completed and published its report.

ACTION – Hard copy of Mr Mehaffey's presentation to be supplied for Councillor Rainey and Mr Hinds.

Following confirmation that members had no further questions or comments, The Chairman directed members to the designation of watercourses and minor works for information section of the business book, pages 14 to 16, and invited Mr Mehaffey to address the Council.

7. DESIGNATION OF WATERCOURSE AND MINOR WORKS FOR INFORMATION

U3783 Abbeyview Stream, Muckamore.

Mr Mehaffey gave a background report explaining that this proposal was being made to allow the Rivers Agency to carry out necessary minor works to alleviate the risk of flooding to five properties in the vicinity.

On the proposal of Alderman Beggs, seconded by Mr Cummings, the Council determined that the aforementioned section of watercourse should be designated.

The Chairman thanked Mr Mehaffey for his presentation and then referred members to the schemes recommended for acceptance on pages 17 to 25 of their business books, and invited Mr Aldridge to address members.

8. SCHEMES RECOMMENDED FOR ACCEPTANCE

Ballygawley Water Flood Alleviation Scheme, Ballygawley.

Mr Aldridge detailed the proposed scheme for the Council, explaining that the scheme involved the construction of a sheet piled floodwall and a length of earth bank along with flood barriers and associated back drainage at three separate locations in the area. Mr Aldridge advised that the scheme was being undertaken to reduce the risk of flooding and flood damage to a local School along with a number of residential properties and access roads.

On the proposal of Councillor Gillespie, seconded by Councillor Rainey, the Council agreed to the proposed scheme.

The Chairman enquired if fisheries interests had been considered as part of this scheme. Mr Aldridge assured The Chairman that fisheries interests had been fully consulted throughout the process of developing this scheme.

Councillor Gillespie complimented Mr Aldridge on the proposals for this scheme and stated that he was pleased to see action being taken in this area to reduce the risk of flooding. Councillor Rainey voiced his agreement with Councillor Gillespie and shared his support for this scheme.

Councillor Rainey went on to enquire if Roads Service had been consulted on this scheme as roads works are also being undertaken in the area. Mr Aldridge confirmed that Roads Service had been fully consulted to ensure that both the road works and flood alleviation scheme would progress without negatively impacting upon each other.

Councillor King asked how many tenders had been received for the works involved with the Ballygawley Water Scheme. Mr Aldridge explained that the Rivers Agency used a framework for consultants and a framework for contractors for capital works. He went on to advise that this particular scheme had been designed in house by Rivers Agency staff, and that now approval had been received from the Council tenders would be invited from the framework contractors.

Alderman Beggs asked if any evidence was present to suggest that there was an increase in interest in tendering for Rivers Agency construction work. He also asked when it would be possible for companies to apply for inclusion on the Agency framework. Mr Aldridge confirmed that the Rivers Agency worked within guidance set by the Department of Finance and Personnel, and that the current framework for contractors had one year left to run before it would be open for renewal. He also advised the Council that the framework for consultants would be open this year.

Dr Johnston, referring back to an earlier point regarding the involvement of the Roads Service in this scheme, advised the Council that he was aware that the Roads Service routinely considered the use of sustainable urban drainage systems as part of any works undertaken.

Knock River and Connswater River Flood Alleviation Scheme

Mr Aldridge provided a background to the scheme and the reason for it to the Council. He advised that this scheme was designed to alleviate severe flooding problems associated with the Knock and Connswater Rivers over the past number of years and involved extensive works along the lengths of both rivers.

Mr Aldridge went on to provide details of how these works were being programmed to integrate into the construction of the major Connswater Community “Greenway” project proposed to improve the quality of urban and river environments in East Belfast.

Mr Aldridge explained that there existed a difficulty with funding for this scheme to progress in line with the timescales for the “Greenway” project, but he assured the Council that the Rivers Agency was doing everything possible to secure the additional funding required.

On the proposal of Councillor McBriar, seconded by Dr Johnston, the Council agreed to the proposed scheme.

Ms Dobbin asked if there was any way that the Rivers Agency could attract external funding to meet the shortfall. Mr Aldridge explained that as an Executive Agency for the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development there were strict guidelines that must be followed. These would not allow Rivers Agency to seek funding except through official government channels. Mr Aldridge assured the Council that the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development was being approached regarding the funding shortfall and the Rivers Agency was doing everything possible.

Mr J Clarke expanded on this by explaining that the Rivers Agency currently had a programme of works that had been funded, and that in order to ensure that no other planned works were adversely affected the Agency was seeking to secure the funding for this particular scheme separately. He explained that the Rivers Agency would carry out these works as funding allowed, but were keen to move forward as soon as possible to link up with the “Greenway” project in order to maximise value for the public purse and minimise disruption to the public.

The Chairman stressed the support of the Drainage Council for this project and the Agency’s bid for additional funding. Alderman Beggs seconded the support of the Council for the Agency’s bid.

Mr Aldridge stated that he would ensure that the support of the Council was taken on board and raised during discussions with the Minister.

ACTION – Chairman to write to Minister Gildernew MP MLA outlining Drainage Council Support for the Knock River and Connswater River Flood Alleviation Scheme

9. WATERCOURSE NOT RECOMMENDED FOR DESIGNATION

The Chairman referred members to pages 26-27 of the business book and invited Mr Mehaffey to address the Council.

Unnamed watercourse affecting Annaghanoon Road, Waringstown, Craigavon.

Mr Mehaffey advised the Council that a request had been received by the Rivers Agency from Ms Delores Kelly MLA and Mr Samuel Lawson asking the Council to designate a 2.32 Kilometre section of watercourse as described above.

Mr Mehaffey stated that an assessment had been carried out by Rivers Agency staff that determined that flooding that had been experienced in this area was unlikely to be attributable to the watercourse cited above. Therefore it had been determined that designation of the watercourse would not be likely to improve the situation, and remedial measures for this would be expected to be within the capabilities of local landowners and property owners.

On the proposal of Councillor King, seconded by Mr Hinds, the Council determined that the watercourse affecting the Annaghanoon Road should not be designated.

10. CORRESPONDENCE ISSUED BY SECRETARIAT SINCE LAST MEETING

The Secretary drew members' attention to pages 28-29 of the business book. He advised the Council that correspondence had been received from Ms Delores Kelly MLA on behalf of Mr Samuel Lawson of 8 Annaghanoon Road in Waringstown, Craigavon requesting that the Council consider designation of a watercourse affecting his property.

The Secretary also drew members' attentions to the letter issued by him as Secretary to the Council advising Ms Kelly MLA that the matter would be considered at this meeting of the Drainage Council. He assured the Council that, as stated in his letter, correspondence would be issued regarding the decision of the Council.

The Chairman thanked The Secretary for presenting the correspondence, and asked if members had any other business that they wished to raise. The Chairman confirmed that no further business was to be raised.

ACTION – Correspondence confirming non designation of watercourse affecting Annaghanoon Road, Waringstown to be issued.

11. AOB

11.1 Rivers Agency Senior Management Structure

The Secretary advised the Council that as a result of a recent promotion exercise the Rivers Agency now had a new Director of Development, and had adjusted the senior management structure to a new 4 directorate model. He provided a copy of the new structure to each member for their information.

11.2 Members Folders

The Secretary drew members' attention to the travel expenses claim form and enquiry form provided.

Councillor Gillespie raised the matter of the Rivers Agency receiving an award for works carried out as part of the Moneymore Flood Alleviation Scheme. Councillor Gillespie wished to put on record his congratulations to the Agency for receiving this award.

The Chairman confirmed that he had spoken directly to the Agency management upon hearing about the award to offer his congratulations and offered congratulations again on behalf of the Drainage Council.

Mr Aldridge thanked the Council for their support and was pleased to advise them that this particular scheme had been designed in house by Rivers Agency staff. He stated that it was good for young engineers to receive recognition and assured the Council that he would pass on its congratulations.

11.3 Date & general location for next meeting

The Secretary proposed a number of dates around late June or early July 2010 for the next meeting. After some deliberation it was agreed that the Secretariat would make arrangements for late June 2010 and notify members of the arrangements in due course. The members agreed that County Down was preferred as a venue for the next meeting.

The Chairman then thanked members for attending and declared the meeting closed.

Meeting Closed