



**Draft Minutes of the Meeting of the Water Advisory Body  
Wednesday 13 July 2022, 10am**

Venue: WebEx VC.

Attended by:

Chairperson Paul McGowan

Members Michelle Minihan Dónal Purcell  
Martin Sisk Miriam McDonald

Secretariat Claire Gavin Deirdre Byrne  
Darren Browne

**1. Minutes of main meeting on 8 June 2022**

The Members agreed the minutes of this meeting subject to minor editorial amendments.  
The minutes 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 board agreed to reschedule the meeting with Irish Water to a tentative new date of 10.30am, 2 September 2022. This is subject to the availability of representatives from Irish Water with confirmation to follow today's meeting. The meeting will take place in-person.

#### **4. Irish Water Regulatory Framework**

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

The WAB are scheduled to meet with representatives of An Fóram Uisce (AFU) on 13 September 2022. The meeting will be held in-person in Dublin with a final location and time to be agreed with AFU. A WAB meeting will take place in the afternoon, following a break for lunch. The presentation for the meeting will be finalised following the meeting with Irish Water in early September and will be circulated to members for final comment.

With the targeted survey of Irish Water customers published in May 2022, the WAB discussed actionable next steps in light of considerations of the current regulatory framework. In addition to a meeting with Irish Water in September to discuss the findings and recommendations of the research, the WAB will consider advice that could be made to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) is also expected to publish its findings of complaints handling by Irish Water following contamination within the Gorey public water supply. These findings will help inform the WAB's meeting with Irish Water and subsequent advice to the Minister. The possibility of carrying out similar surveys on an annual basis was discussed. This could involve surveys taking place in new targeted locations to build up a trend analysis across different locations.

#### **5. Quarterly Report 2 of 2022**

##### ***Progress Update:***

Material for the report has been received from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the CRU. Miriam McDonald has also drafted text covering the Irish Water Customer Survey report, released in May, for inclusion in Part 3 of the second Quarterly Report. The EPA are to revert on outstanding queries regarding the performance indicators. A draft of the report has been issued to the Chairperson for review before circulation to the full board. The secretariat are engaging with the public relations company in preparation of the report release with publication expected in late July or early August. For the release of the report, it was suggested that a new video of the Chairperson introducing the WAB could be developed for the website.

## **6. WAB Work Plan review for the year to date**

The secretariat are currently drafting a revised 2022 work plan. Additions to the work plan include the ongoing review of the Irish Water regulatory framework. The draft work plan will be circulated to the board in the next few days. In April 2021, the WAB published its Stage 1 review of Irish Water's procurement policies and procedures. This was in line with the "procurement, remuneration and staffing policies" function of the WAB. The review focused on the methodologies Irish Water use regarding procurement and the effectiveness and compliance of its policies and processes. At the time, the WAB agreed that Stage 2 would take place following the outcome of the CRU's oversight of Irish Water's implementation of the Scottish Water International Report recommendations. The board discussed a Stage 2 review for inclusion in the 2022 work plan. The Chairperson will request the CRU to provide a summary note on the current status of Irish Water's implementation following the 'Scottish Water International' report recommendations. This will provide the WAB with a basis to discuss next steps for the WAB's Stage 2 procurement review. It was agreed that this will be an agenda item for discussion at the October meeting.

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

The following meeting dates were agreed:

- 2 September at 10:30am - this meeting is scheduled to take place in-person and replaces the previously scheduled meeting for 23 August. Representatives of Irish Water are tentatively scheduled to attend (as mentioned in Agenda Item 3).
- 13 September – A meeting will take place firstly with AFU followed by a main meeting of the WAB. This meeting is scheduled to take place in-person in Dublin with a final location and time to be agreed with AFU (as mentioned in Agenda Item 4).
- 18 October at 10.30am – This meeting is scheduled to take place remotely via WebEx.

## **8. Any Other Business**

***Meeting with representatives of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage:***

The board agreed to invite representatives of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) to the WAB meeting on 18 October to discuss progress on the revised Drinking Water Directive, which must be transposed into Irish law by January 2023. The directive will mean new roles and responsibilities for water suppliers and regulators. The meeting will also be an opportunity to meet the new Assistant Secretary for the Water Division of the Department, who is due to take up his position in September.

***Quarterly Report circulation:***

The WAB agreed to supply upcoming Quarterly reports to Irish Water, under embargo a day in advance of publication.

***Irish Water Single Public Utility status:***

The Chairperson informed the WAB that Irish Water will be rebranding as Uisce Éireann following agreements from the talks between local authorities and Irish Water at the Workplace Relations Commission.

**The meeting was brought to a close.**

<b>Agenda Item No:</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Decision</b>
1.	Minutes of WAB Main Meeting on 8 June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreed subject to minor editorial amendment.</li> <li>• To be published on the website.</li> </ul>
3.	Meeting with Irish Water.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The board agreed to reschedule the meeting with Irish Water to a tentative new date of 10.30am, 2 September 2022, subject to their availability.</li> </ul>
4.	Meeting with An Fóram Uisce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The WAB are scheduled to meet with representatives of AFU on 13 September 2022.</li> <li>• Location and time to be agreed with AFU.</li> <li>• The presentation for the meeting will be finalised following the meeting with Irish Water in early September and will be circulated to members for final comment.</li> </ul>
5.	Progress of Quarterly Report 2 of 2022.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The EPA are to revert on outstanding queries regarding the performance indicators.</li> <li>• The draft report will be circulated to the board following a review by the Chairperson.</li> <li>• Publication is expected in late July or early August.</li> <li>• A new video of the Chairperson introducing the WAB could be developed for the website.</li> </ul>
6.	WAB Work Plan review for the year to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The draft work plan will be circulated to the board in the next few days.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The WAB's Stage 2 Irish Water Procurement review will be an agenda item for discussion at the October WAB meeting</li> <li>• The Chairperson will request the CRU to provide a summary note on the current status of Irish Water's implementation following the 'Scottish Water International' report recommendations.</li> </ul>
7.	Upcoming WAB meeting dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The following meeting dates were agreed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 2 September at 10.30am</li> <li>○ 13 September</li> <li>○ 18 October at 10.30am</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
8.	Any Other Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The board agreed to invite representatives of the DHLGH to the WAB meeting on 18 October to discuss progress on the drinking water directive.</li> <li>• The WAB agreed to supply upcoming Quarterly reports under embargo a day in advance of publication to Irish Water.</li> </ul>