



Legatus Group CWMS Advisory Committee

10th November 2020

Kadina Sports and Leisure Centre

(draft) MINUTES

1. Welcome and apologies

Andrew MacDonald (Chair) opened the meeting at 1.30pm and welcomed members present Adam Broadbent, Matt McRae, Riaz Uddin, Gary Easthope and Hayden Battle along with Paul Chapman. Andrew also welcomed Michelle Wittholz, CWMS Manager at the LGA, and Suresh Rao from the Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council and noted an apology from Simon Millcock.

2. Previous Minutes

Draft Minutes from the meeting of the Legatus Group CWMS Advisory Committee (the Advisory Committee) on 12th August 2020 were accepted as correct.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 PhD Internships

The Advisory Committee noted that both internships are now under way and members look forward to reviewing the work progressively in the lead up to the CWMS Conference in March 2021 where both pieces of work will be presented.

3.2 CWMS Discussion Paper

The Advisory Committee is yet to receive the draft of this Discussion Paper and the matter was addressed in strategic terms. It was thought important to ensure that the tone of the document was right, between making the positive case for improvement and avoiding too negative an impression about Council's governance of CWMS.

Much of the discussion reflected on the position of operational staff who confronted the daily challenges of CWMS and the need to register those challenges more clearly with senior Councils staff. The problems associated with using contractors to operate CWMS was also canvassed, along with the need for a business case assessment for bringing activities back in-house. Positive points were also made about the benefits of CWMS and the long time frame needed to assess their performance. The lack of awareness of CWMS was seen as a major issue.

The meeting determined that the process of drafting the Discussion Paper should proceed in collaboration with the LGA and that a draft then be circulated among the Advisory Committee members for their comment. The possibility of reframing the document for the LGA rather than for SAROC was raised but no decision made.

3.3 Proposed CWMS training course

The Advisory Committee endorsed the request to extend this project by a month into 2021.

3.4 Asset management by remote sensing proposal

Progress with this project was noted.

3.5 CWMS Risk Management Workshop

Members of the Advisory Committee and the guests at the meeting had attended this Workshop which was seen to be very worthwhile. The Chair observed that the identification of substantial risks could constitute the starting line for reform. The involvement of LGA Mutual was warmly welcomed.

4. CWMS Conference

The Advisory Committee noted the proposed agenda for the conference and looked forward to discussing it in more detail at the next meeting.

5. Any other business

The Project Officer provide a summary of a recent Draft Inquiry Report by ESCOSA that was received after the agenda materials were sent (*Inquiry into regulatory arrangements for small-scale water, sewerage and energy services. Draft Inquiry Report. ESCOSA, August 2020*).

This report proposes introducing the so-called verified trust and accountability model (VTA model) which the Advisory Committee had previously considered under the title of Ethically Based Regulation. The central idea is that CWMS licensees who the Commission has no reason to think is not customer focussed, financially sustainable and compliant with regulation would be regarded as Category A and would have reduced (but still significant) reporting requirements. Category B Councils would face so-called tailored regulation at least as tight as currently and would be named on the ESCOSA website. In addition, all Councils would be required to become members of the EWOSA and would incur fees to do so and if the Ombudsman adjudicated any complaints.

Discussion among the members concerned the potential for increased costs and reporting requirements. Given the important work of the Committee already underway, it was agreed not to make a submission to ESCOSA regarding the VAT model.

6. Date of next meeting

No date was set for the next meeting.

7. Close

The meeting closed at 3 pm.