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## Business Plan 2012-2013

[www.riversagencyni.gov.uk](http://www.riversagencyni.gov.uk)



## Foreword

I am pleased to present the Rivers Agency's ("the Agency") Business Plan for the period 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013. The Agency's activities contribute to delivering improved sustainable environmental outcomes – a goal within the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development ("the Department") Corporate Balanced Scorecard 2012/13. The key performance targets in the business plan have been agreed by the Minister.

The Department is the Competent Authority under the European Directive on

the assessment and management of flood risks (Floods Directive). This EU Directive was transposed into Northern Ireland Regulation in November 2009. Key steps to implement the requirements of the Directive will be taken forward in 2012/13 with assistance from other Government Departments and responsible authorities.

The Agency will continue to progress legislation to introduce reservoir safety regulations. The policy that underpins the legislation has been informed by a series of stakeholder meetings that took place in 2011. In 2012 these policies will be subject to public consultation. Following public consultation it is intended to introduce the draft Reservoirs Bill to the Northern Ireland (NI) Assembly by 31 March 2013 with a view to completing the legislative process by March 2014.

Reducing flooding risk and minimising the damage caused by flooding will continue to be priority issues for the Agency. Resources will be devoted to efficient management of our infrastructure assets and the delivery of cost beneficial flood alleviation schemes.

The Agency plays a key role in providing information and advice to the Department of Environment (DOE) Planning NI on the drainage and flood risk aspects of Development Plans and planning





applications in line with the Planning Policy Statement 15 - Planning and Flood Risk. The Agency is actively involved in supporting DOE Planning NI with a review of Planning Policy Statement 15 to bring it into line with the Floods Directive and to update policies related to all sources of flooding.

The management and maintenance of our arterial drainage systems, which are fundamental to securing good drainage throughout Northern Ireland, will continue. The Agency will continue to be pro-active in addressing environmental matters in the planning and execution of all works for which it is responsible.

The Agency is fully committed to providing the best possible standards of service to our customers. In particular we will continue to seek to ensure an appropriate response in flood emergency situations working closely with other Government agencies and responders.

In taking forward the business priorities outlined in this Plan, the Agency is committed to ensuring that equality and good relations underpin all our activities and that we work to achieve these measurable outcomes which link to our key objectives and business targets.

Catherine McCallum  
Chief Executive  
Rivers Agency



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### The Agency

Rivers Agency (“the Agency”) is an Executive Agency within the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (“the Department”). The Agency is subject to the direction and control of the Minister with responsibility for the Department. The Agency Framework Document sets out the relationship between the Agency and the Department and the Agency’s accountability to Ministers and Parliament.

### Vision and Aims

#### Vision

*To manage flood risk to facilitate the social, economic and environmental development of Northern Ireland.*

#### Aims

The following aims support the vision:

- Reducing risk to life and damage to property from flooding from rivers and the sea.
- Undertaking watercourse and coastal flood management in a sustainable manner.

### Functions

The Department is the statutory drainage and flood protection authority for Northern Ireland. Under the terms of the Drainage (Northern Ireland) Order 1973 the Department has discretionary powers to:

- Maintain watercourses and sea defences which have been designated by the Drainage Council for Northern Ireland (Membership is listed in Appendix 3).
- Construct and maintain drainage and flood defence structures.
- Administer advisory and enforcement procedures to protect the drainage function of all watercourses.

### Organisation and Resources

The Agency is headed by a Chief Executive supported by a Senior Management Directorate and as at March 2012 employs 167 non industrial and 233 industrial staff. The Agency’s Headquarters is located at Hydebank in Belfast and it has Regional Offices in Lisburn and Omagh and Area Offices in Coleraine, Craigavon, Lisburn and Ballinamallard, which services the Fermanagh Sub-Area. Further details of the organisational structure and office locations can be found in Appendix 1.



### The Level and Management Of Flood Risk

It is currently estimated that some 46,000 properties are situated within the river and coastal flood plain(s) in Northern Ireland with nearly a third of these located within the Belfast Metropolitan Area. Historic investment in flood defence and drainage infrastructure has provided improved protection to approximately a third of the overall number of properties at risk. This suggests that 1 in 18 properties are at risk from flooding from rivers or the sea, with about a third of these benefitting from some form of flood alleviation.

Other sources of flooding also contribute to flood risk with some 28,000 further properties at risk from reservoirs and tens of thousands of properties at risk from surface water.

The Agency’s approach to the management of flood risk is delivered through the construction of new and maintenance of existing flood defence and drainage infrastructure and the implementation of the Floods Directive along with Reservoir Safety. This approach is reflected in the Agency’s business priorities for 2012/13.

### Business Priorities for 2012/13

#### Floods Directive

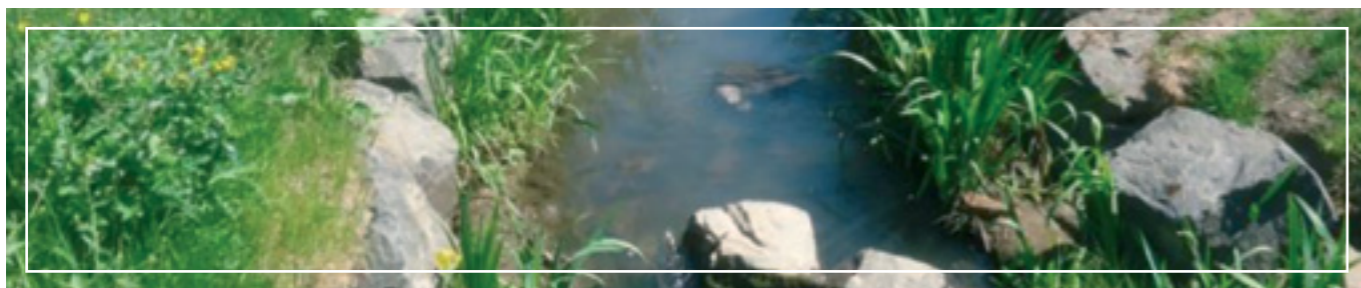
The EU Directive on the assessment and management of flood risk (2007/60/EC) more commonly known as the Floods Directive was transposed into Northern Ireland Regulation in November 2009 and is known as ‘The Water Environment (Floods Directive) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2009’.

Within the Directive there are 3 delivery milestones:

- Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) – December 2011;
- Flood Hazard and Risk Maps – December 2013; and
- Flood Risk Management Plans – December 2015.

A report on the PRFA was published on the Departmental website in December 2011. The PFRA considers flooding from all of the main flood sources which have been determined to be rivers, the sea, surface water runoff and impounded water bodies such as dams and reservoirs.

For 2012/13 the Agency intends to produce at least 60% of the Flood Hazard and Risk Maps. During 2012/13 Flood Risk



Management Plans will continue to be developed.

The Northern Ireland Regulations require a coordinated approach with other government departments, district councils, NI Water, the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service and the public. The Agency will continue to work closely with these groups and other parties that have an interest in and represent those affected by flooding and with colleagues in the Office of Public Works in the Republic of Ireland to fulfil the obligations of the Directive in respect of trans-boundary catchments.

#### Reservoir Safety

The Agency is progressing legislation to introduce regulation of reservoir safety. This need was identified in the policy framework document "Living with Rivers and the Sea". The recently completed Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment as required by the EU Floods Directive has quantified the impact and confirmed the need for this legislation.

The policy that underpins the legislation has been informed by a series of stakeholder meetings that took place in 2011. In 2012 these policies will be subject to public consultation. It is intended to

introduce the draft Reservoirs Bill to the NI Assembly by 31 March 2013 with a view to completing the legislative process by March 2014.

#### Flood Alleviation

While investment in flood alleviation has reduced the risk of flooding to people and property, a significant element of risk remains. This risk has materialised in recent years demonstrating the very real cost of flooding to society and highlighting the need for flood alleviation schemes to protect people and property. The Agency delivers an ongoing programme of flood alleviation schemes which seek to maximise the benefit to people and property from available resources. In delivering flood alleviation the risk of flooding to new and existing development is also taken into account.

#### Advisory and Enforcement

A key aspect of sustainable development is to ensure that the risk of flooding to new and existing development is appropriately managed. The Agency plays a key role in providing information and advice to DOE Planning NI on the drainage and flood protection aspects of Development Plans and planning applications in line with the Planning Policy Statement 15 - Planning and



Flood Risk. The Agency is actively involved in supporting Planning NI with a review of Planning Policy Statement 15 to bring it into line with the Floods Directive and to update policies related to all sources of flooding.

The Agency also protects the drainage function of watercourse through its regulatory role under the Drainage (NI) Order 1973.

#### Asset Management

Recent flooding events have provided a real test of the Agency's flood defence assets and highlighted the need to ensure that they continue to perform effectively. The replacement value of the Agency's assets are over £600m, including 90 kilometers of raised flood defences, 26 kilometers of sea defences and 385 kilometers of culverts. The Agency manages its assets through a suite of Asset Management Plans for its culverts, sea and river defences. Work programmes are being developed on the basis of condition assessments for all categories of assets and as part of the approach the Agency will continue to benchmark the level of asset condition with the wider industry. An ongoing cycle of inspection, assessment and intervention will ensure the effective functioning of assets.

#### Water Level Measuring

The Rivers Agency monitors and measures river flows and water levels at locations throughout Northern Ireland. It supplies appropriate river flow data to the United Kingdom (UK) National River Flow Archives on a monthly and annual basis and to other users such as Northern Ireland Environment Agency and Northern Ireland Water who use the data for environmental and water resource monitoring.

The Agency is also seeking to make water level information more readily available to a wide range of users.

#### Water Level Management

The Agency will continue to fulfil its obligations to manage the water levels of Lough Erne, Lough Neagh and stretches of the River Bann and River Lagan as far as climatic conditions permit whilst taking into account the needs and interests of various stakeholders. Lough Neagh and the Lower Bann will continue to be controlled by a series of sluices at Toome, Portna and the Cutts near Coleraine. Water levels in both Upper and Lower Lough Erne will continue to be monitored on a daily basis. The Lower Lough Erne level will continue to be managed by the Agency in conjunction with the Electricity Supply



Board (ESB) within the levels prescribed in the Erne Drainage and Development Act 1950. Level control of the Lower Lough will be by electricity generation and spilling at the hydro-electric power station at Cliff near Belleek; while the Upper Lough will be controlled by sluice gates at Portora, Enniskillen.

#### Maintenance

Rivers Agency carries out cyclical inspections to designated watercourses, and culvert inlet grilles. The timing of these inspections is dependent on the likely maintenance requirements, drainage impact and flood risk. For example, high risk inlet grilles are inspected on a weekly basis and rural watercourses are generally on a six yearly programme. Maintenance works identified during these inspections are programmed and carried out by the Agency's industrial staff using in house plant, contractors or by using site specific repair and maintenance contracts. The maintenance programme is evaluated using environmental and cost-benefit criteria prior to the inclusion of proposals in the annual works programme.

#### Health and Safety

In carrying out works the Agency strictly adheres to all Health and Safety legislation

and endeavours to create a safe working environment both for staff and in areas accessible to the public. The Agency will continue to adopt a pro-active role on health and safety issues and in the coming year will continue to review and update procedures. Ongoing and continuous training of staff will remain a key element in reducing accident rates.

#### Environment

The Agency carries out works in an environmentally sensitive manner and employs Conservation Officers to give advice and oversee maintenance and capital works schemes.

The Agency is fully committed to complying with the implications of the Water Framework Directive and has been actively involved with Northern Ireland Environment Agency in drawing up draft River Basin Management Plans.



### Key Objectives and Performance Targets

#### Key Objective 1:

To deliver sustainable flood risk management policies to meet society's social, environmental and economic needs

- 1.1 Introduce the draft Reservoirs Bill to the NI Assembly by 31 March 2013 with a view to completing the legislative process by March 2014.

#### Key Objective 2:

To progress the implementation of the European Directive for the assessment and management of flood risks

- 2.1 Complete at least 60% of the maps and commence 3 Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMP's) as the year 4 actions in a 6 year plan to implement the EU Floods Directive by 2015.

#### Key Objective 3:

To maintain flood defence and drainage infrastructure in a satisfactory condition

- 3.1 Maintain infrastructure to provide enhanced flood protection to 15,500 properties:
  - 88% Culverts in fair condition (fair condition means only minor defects are present) or better;
  - 95% Sea Defences in fair condition (fair condition means only minor defects are present) or better; and
  - 70% Fluvial Defences in fair condition (fair condition means only minor defects are present) or better.



- 3.2 Inspect & maintain as required, 98% of all designated urban open watercourses in accordance with the Maintenance Manual.
- 3.3 Inspect & maintain as required, 98% of all designated culvert inlet grilles in accordance with the Maintenance Manual.
- 3.4 Maintain a minimum of 460 designated rural watercourses as part of the Agency's scheduled programme.

Key Objective 4:

To reduce the number of properties currently at risk of flooding from rivers and the sea

- 4.1 Construct infrastructure to offer enhanced flood protection to 66 properties
- 4.2 Respond to 98% of Schedule 6 applications within 3 months of receipt.
- 4.3 Ensure response to 90% of requests to Rivers Agency for assistance within 3 hours during flooding events up to and including a level defined as significant.

Key Objective 5:

To operate to resource limits

- 5.1 Provisional Capital and Resource outturn to be between 98% and 100% of the Final Budget.
- 5.2 Produce unqualified accounts which are laid in the Assembly by the summer recess.



Key Objective 6:

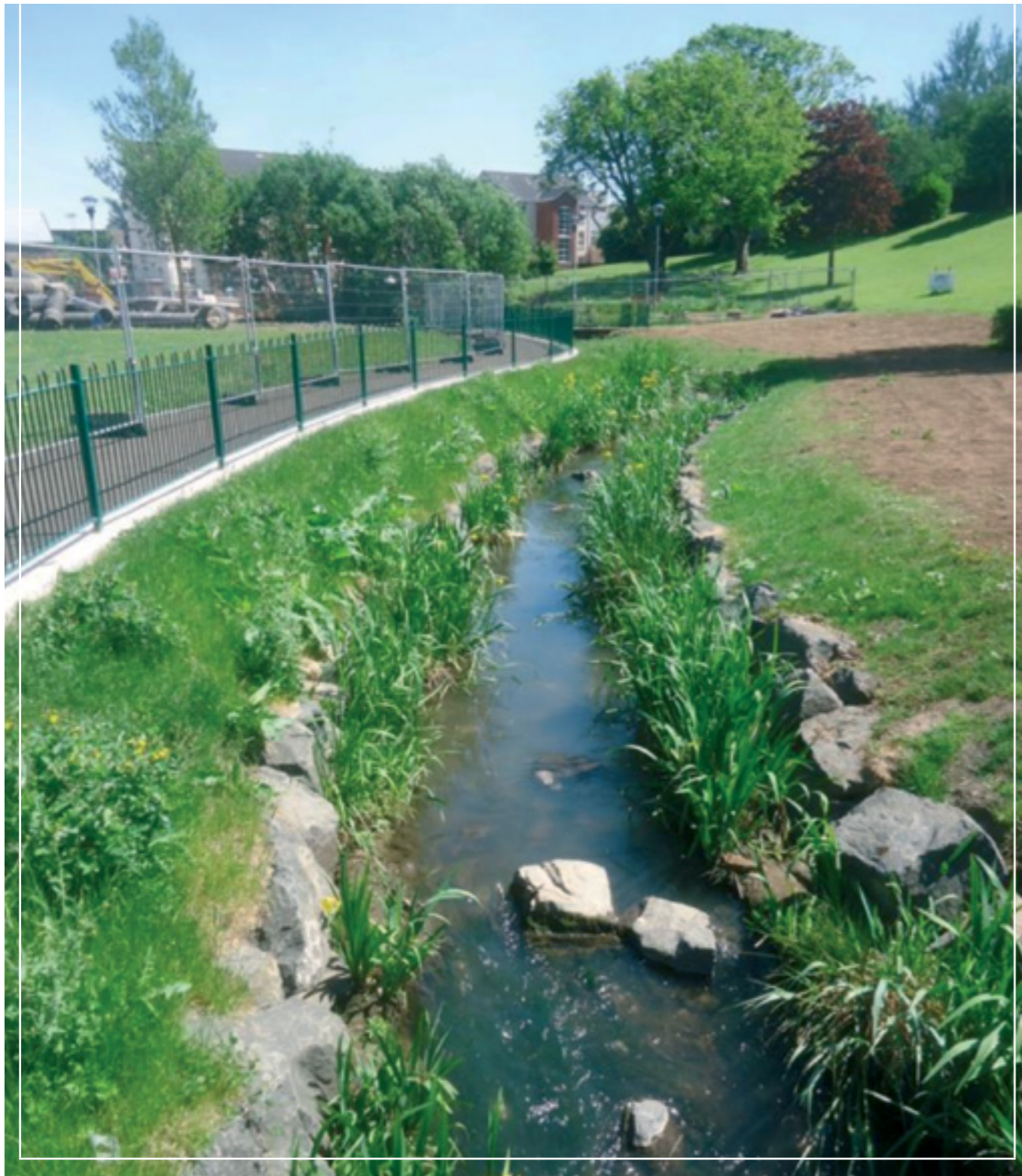
To support and motivate all our people to achieve the Agency's objectives

- 6.1 Deliver more than a 65% reduction in lost time work related accidents from the 2006-07 base figure of 21.
- 6.2 Manage average annual level of absenteeism due to sickness for all industrial staff to meet target of 10.5 days.
- 6.3 Manage average annual level of absenteeism due to sickness for all non-industrial staff to meet target of 8.9 days.

Key Objective 7:

To deliver quality services for our customers and stakeholders in a fair and equitable way

- 7.1 Issue substantive replies to 95% of written enquiries within 15 working days of receipt.
- 7.2 Respond to 80% of planning application consultations within 21 working days of receipt.
- 7.3 Support the Drainage Council review of the existing criteria used for the designation of watercourses.



**Chief Executive**  
**Mrs. Catherine McCallum**

**Director of Engineering**  
**Mr. P Aldridge**

Programme of capital works and Design; Construction procurement; Hydrometrics; Asset Management; Planning Advisory; and Professional development.

**Director of Operations**  
**Mr. P Mehaffey**

Operational management of the Eastern Region; Operational management of the Western Region; Operations Support Unit; Health and Safety; Environment; and Emergency planning.

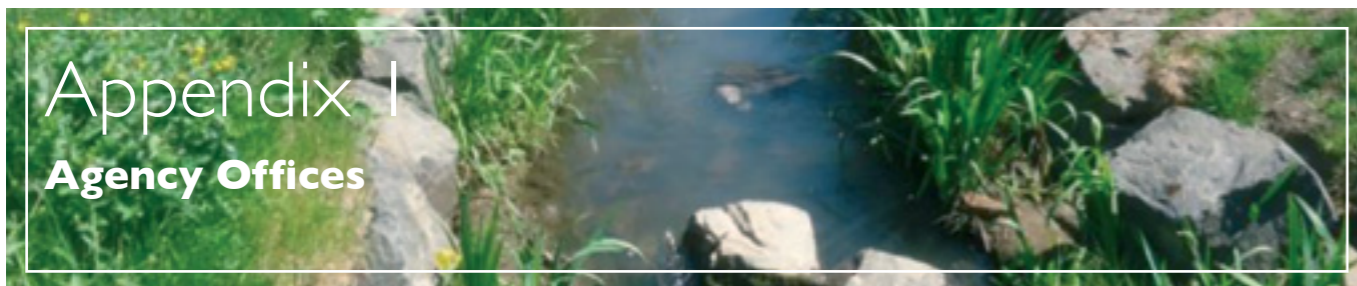
**Director of Development**  
**Mr. D Porter**

Implementation of the EU Floods Directive; Mapping and Modeling; Strategic Planning; and Bill Team.

**Director of Corporate Services**  
**Mr. J Glass**

Finance; Corporate Support and Training; Corporate Co-ordination; IT; and Communications.





# Appendix 1

## Agency Offices

<p><b>Agency Headquarters</b>                  Hydebank                  4 Hospital Road                  Ballydollahan                  BELFAST BT8 8JP                  Tel: 028 9025 3355                  Fax: 028 9025 3455</p>	
<p><b>Western Region</b>                  Regional Office                  Woodside Avenue                  Gortin Road                  Lisnamallard                  OMAGH BT79 7BS                  Tel: 028 8225 4900                  Fax: 028 8225 4901</p>	<p><b>Eastern Region</b>                  Regional Office                  Ravarnet House                  Altona Road                  Largymore                  LISBURN BT27 5QB                  Tel: 028 9260 6100                  Fax: 028 9260 6111</p>
<p><b>Coleraine Office</b>                  37 Castleroe Road                  Castleroe                  COLERAINE BT51 3RL                  Tel: 028 7034 2357                  Fax: 028 7032 0628</p>	<p><b>Armagh Office</b>                  44 Seagoe Industrial Estate                  Seagoe Lower                  CRAIGAVON BT63 5QE                  Tel: 028 3839 9111                  Fax: 028 3839 9113</p>
<p><b>Fermanagh Office</b>                  Riversdale                  Ballinamallard                  Tullylone                  ENNISKILLEN BT94 2NA                  Tel: 028 6638 8529                  Fax: 028 6638 8972</p>	<p><b>Plant Unit</b>                  44 Seagoe Industrial Estate                  Seagoe Lower                  CRAIGAVON BT63 5QE                  Tel: 028 3839 9100                  Fax: 028 3839 9112</p>



# Appendix 2

## Agency Opening Baseline 2012/13

Agency Opening Baseline 2012/13	
Description	Opening Baseline 2012/13* £'000
Salaries	6,294
Wages	5,743
GAE	895
Current	2,785
Current receipts	(210)
Flood Risk Management	420
Recurrent capital PV&M	150
Drainage infrastructure	1,220
Capitalisation of running costs	930
Flood Alleviation	1,259
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,486</b>

\*In October 2011 the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development announced that an additional £1 million will be made available to Rivers Agency for flood prevention measures. However, the opening baseline does not include the £1 million as this will be met from a reclassification of surplus DEL Resource held centrally in DARD Finance Division at the first monitoring round in 2012/13.

# Appendix 3

## Membership of the Drainage Council for Northern Ireland

<b>Name</b>	<b>Interest Represented</b>
Dr. Harold Johnston (Chair)	Drainage Specialist
Councillor William King, MBE (Vice-Chair)	Coleraine Borough Council
Alderman Roy Beggs	Larne Borough Council
Councillor Sean Clarke	Cookstown District Council
Councillor Brian Hanvey	Castlereagh Borough Council
Councillor Olive Mercer	Banbridge District Council
Councillor Connaire McGreevy	Newry and Mourne District Council
Councillor Allan Rainey	Omagh District Council
Councillor Willis Robinson	Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council
Councillor Bernice Swift	Fermanagh District Council
Councillor Roy Thompson	Antrim Borough Council
Ms. Rosemary Dobbin	Conservation
Mr. Trevor Hinds	Industry
Mr. Brendan Kerr	Fishery
Dr. Bernie Lafferty	Tourism
Mr. Andrew Wilson	Agriculture
Ms. Mary MacIntyre	DOE Planning NI
Mrs Catherine McCallum	Rivers Agency



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