

- 24 AT A MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL, SCIENCE AND BYELAW SUB-COMMITTEE held at the Strathmore Hotel, Morecambe on Tuesday, 18th October 2011

PRESENT – MEMBERS

J. A. Clark	(Chairman)	MMO (Marine Science)
J. Butler		MMO (Shellfish)
B. Crawford		MMO (Anglers and Recreation)
T. R. Glover		Sefton Council
R. Graham		MMO (Fishing)
M. R. Owen		MMO (Fishing – Various)
N. Robinson		MMO (Officer)
C. J. Woods		MMO (Shellfish)

IN ATTENDANCE

T. Jones	MMO (Aquaculture)
B. Shields	Environment Agency
G. Whitfield	ISCZ Project Manager

OFFICERS

H. Ake	C. Dobson
I. V. Andrews	D. Dobson
S. M. Atkins	M. Knott
S. Brown	S. J. Waite

VISITORS

G. Meadows	Fisherman
M. De'ath	Fisherman

APOLOGIES

W. Darbyshire	Environment Agency (Officer)
C. Frid	MMO (Scientist)
C. Lumb	Natural England (Officer)
A. J. Markley	Cumbria County Council

- 25 The Chief Officer opened the meeting by announcing with regret the death of MMO appointee Mr Richard Langley. Mr Langley was a highly experienced and successful fisherman with strong concern for the environment of Morecambe Bay and his contribution to the NWIFCA would be sadly missed. The Enforcement Director, David Dobson, would be representing the Authority at the funeral on Thursday, 20th October. A letter of condolence on behalf of Members and Officers had been sent to Mrs Langley. Members were asked to stand in silence in tribute.

26 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. The Chairman announced apologies for absence and welcomed members.
2. A report for Agenda Item 9, TAG Update, had been tabled.

27 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST IN AGENDA ITEMS

Members declared an interest in Agenda items as follows:

Agenda Item 5. Proposed new Byelaw 4. Mrs M. R. Owen, Mr C. J. Woods.

Agenda Item 10. Cockle Transplantation Trial. Mrs M. R. Owen, Mr C. J. Woods.

28 TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL, SCIENCE AND BYELAW SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21ST JUNE 2011

RESOLVED. The minutes of the Technical, Science and Byelaw Sub-Committee meeting held on 21st June 2011 be approved and signed as a correct record.

29 MATTERS ARISING. There were no matters arising.

30 PROPOSED NEW BYELAW 3: REQUIREMENT FOR A PERMIT TO FISH FOR COCKLES AND MUSSELS IN THE NWIFCA DISTRICT

The Enforcement Director stated that the proposed byelaw had been discussed at the last sub-committee meeting. The major shortcoming of Byelaw 5 was the provision for hobby fishing of up to 5kg of cockles per day. This made enforcement of the byelaw virtually impossible. The proposed new byelaw did not suggest limiting the number of permits, but suggested a two tier system comprising both a commercial gathering permit and non-commercial gathering permit. It was felt that to split the permit scheme in such a way would make it more enforceable. Terms and conditions could be attached to the permit such as the use of a specific type of riddle, a ban on the use of net bags and perhaps a requirement for catch returns.

Mr Woods voiced concerns at the prospect of the fishery being enlarged legally from the current numbers of 400 to 500 people to as many as 2,000 based on past records if a Regulating Order could not very quickly be established.

Mrs Owen agreed that the suggestion of specifying the type of riddles were important, also a ban on the use of net bags but felt that to introduce two sets of permits would be completely wrong and unenforceable and could result in a free for all.

Officers noted that whilst the proposed new byelaw did not restrict the number of permits it was a byelaw that could be enforced. People found on the beach without a permit or not complying with the terms and condition of that permit could be prosecuted. No terms and conditions had been attached to Byelaw 5. The NWSFC had put a lot of time and effort into looking at ways of bringing more control to the fishery but the resulting byelaw did not work. Officers could not enforce the byelaw and it was felt that the reputation of the Authority was being brought into disrepute.

Mr Woods felt the use of photographic or video evidence that could be used as evidence in a prosecution would be seen as a deterrent.

Mrs Owen felt that more support should be forthcoming from agencies such as the HSE. She suggested that a specified area could be defined on which HSE could enforce regulations such as no children working. HSE could also check boats and equipment before fishermen were allowed to take the boat out.

Ms Knott suggested that to have 1,000 or more permitted people operating outside private houses in Lytham and Southport would not help the IFCA's reputation. The numbers of vehicles on a beach such as Leasowe was also a concern as were conservation impacts.

Dr Atkins raised the issue of loaders and carriers being allowed on the beach without a permit. The wording of the proposed byelaw could be applied to make it restrictive and clear that anyone transporting cockles was also considered to be taking them away from the fishery. He felt the suggestion from Mrs Owen of defining a commercial area for a limited period was good but did not know if the IFCA had powers to do that. Dr Atkins suggested issues for discussions should include whether the byelaw should be open or restrictive, whether the training courses should be continued and whether to charge for permits. The issues of what conditions could be applied to a permit and whether the IFCA

could charge for permits would need to be taken up with MMO. Dr Atkins suggested a modification could be made to Byelaw 5 to bring in all the components the Authority wished to include.

Mr Jones said the two permit proposal was an interesting way forward but felt the Authority should be looking at the Regulating Order route where the public right to fish was severed rather than by byelaw. Mr Woods agreed with those comments and said that a Regulating Order was the only way to control numbers. It was suggested that Officers should explore with Defra the possibility of establishing a Fishery Order across the whole District. Dr Atkins said that the Environment Agency had been approached about the possibility of extending the Dee Cockle Fishery Order to include the Wirral. He would investigate further the possibility of a Regulating Order to cover the whole District.

There was some discussion on the numbers of people the fishery could accommodate if a Regulating Order was established. Mr Jones said that paragraph 3.2 of the proposed byelaw did not preclude people from exercising their right to fish, also, a point made earlier in the discussion about being adaptive and the number of people allowed to prosecute the fishery had to be paramount in drawing up any Several or Regulating Order. The amount of cockle or mussel on the bed could be detrimental to its sustainability and if there were not enough people to fish it off it was not achieving anything. The stock needed to be thinned out for it to be sustainable. Mr Jones suggested that rather than thinking in terms of limiting the number of people it should be adapted to the number of people who wanted to fish the bed in order for it to be sustainable. Members were informed that the Marine and Coastal Access Act allowed the Authority to cap effort in any fishery and limit the amount taken according to stock levels.

Dr Atkins agreed to explore with Defra the possibility of defining a commercial bed. Ms Knott asked how a Fishery Order for the whole District would affect the application already submitted for Morecambe Bay. Dr Atkins agreed to raise that point also with Defra.

RESOLVED

1. The report be received.
2. Officers be directed to revisit the wording of the proposed Byelaw 3 and draft a byelaw for commercial fishing incorporating the suggestions discussed. A report to be submitted to a subsequent meeting of the sub-committee.
3. Officers be directed to consult with Defra on the legality of a Fishery Order for cockles throughout the District and how such an Order would affect the position with the current application for Morecambe Bay.

31 COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE WEBSITE

The Scientific Officer presented the report informing Members of the newly established website which had been set up to enable wider discussion and debate on matters relevant to the TSB Sub-Committee. Members had previously agreed that it would be useful for the sub-committee to have such a web forum. The procedures for accessing the forum were given at Annex 1 to the report.

In response to a suggestion from the Chairman that it would be useful to be able to link in with other organisations as well as the sub-committee Ms Ake said although the sub-committee had agreed to a TSB only committee forum page it could be progressed to have a wider authority page to enable people to link in to the forum in that way. Dr Clark informed Members that at a recent meeting of the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee she had made the point that there should be closer interaction between coastal groups and

IFCA in order for each organisation to gain a better understanding of each other's issues, particularly in relation to the present process of defining Marine Coastal Zones.

It was suggested that once the website was working well Officers could look at including all NWIFCA Members. There was a national Communities of Practice web forum for IFCA Officers and organisations they worked closely with. The possibility of that forum being made available to all members and other interested parties would have to be agreed nationally with all IFCAs.

RESOLVED. The report be received.

32 CONSULTATIONS: PREESALL GAS STORAGE

The Chairman reported that she had attended recent meetings of the community group set up to safeguard the interests of the whole district from the impacts of gas storage proposals.

Ms Knott informed Members that the NWIFCA had been asked to comment on conditions it would like to see attached to the marine licence application from Halite Energy. The main issue of concern was the proposal to discharge concentrated brine into the Irish Sea off the coast at Rossall. A response opposing the application and detailing the Authority's reasons for its opposition had been submitted to the developer. In 2007 the Environment Agency had issued a Discharge Consent with conditions to the previous developer, Canatxx, which had now been taken over by Halite Energy. Officers had voiced the Authority's concerns over the Consent which had been based on dispersion modelling data conducted in 2002 and was felt to be outdated. The response to Halite had also been sent to the EA but no response had been received. Mr Shields, EA, agreed to look into this and provide a response. Ms Knott informed Members she would be speaking to Halite in the coming week to explain the Authority's objections to the proposals.

The Chairman said that the work done by Officers was to be commended. The potential impacts of the brine discharge on migratory fish were disturbing and the IFCA would wait to hear the EA position on the Discharge Consent with interest. Dr Clark suggested that the IFCA should be asking Halite for regular briefings and updates on progress with these proposals and Ms Knott agreed to raise that point when speaking to Halite.

RESOLVED

1. The report be received.
2. Mr Shields, the Environment Agency Officer, liaise with EA colleagues and report to NWIFCA regarding the Scientific Officer's response to the Halite consultation and the consent to discharge saline.
3. IFCAs concerns on the consultation be discussed with Halite with a request for regular briefings and updates on progress with the proposals.

33 NWIFCA COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Ms Ake reported on progress with a Communication and Engagement Strategy which must be in place by April 2012. Other IFCAs models were being investigated. Members' suggestions on other stakeholders and methods of communication were sought.

It was part of the NWIFCA's remit to improve communication with stakeholders such as with a regular newsletter and more press releases. An extra member of staff was required to undertake the proposed additional work. The strategy would form part of the Annual Plan and report.

Mrs Owen suggested that the general public should be made more aware of the role of the NWIFCA and it should perhaps look at holding an event or exhibition where the public would have the opportunity to view the work carried out by IFCA and to raise questions. Dr Clark agreed that the Authority should consider an awareness raising event. Other stakeholders included the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee, which included representatives from all North West councils. It was important those councils with a coastline understood the role and remit of the NWIFCA, also shoreline management plan projects, and all associated coastal groups. Other stakeholders suggested included the River Basin Liaison Panel, and projects such as Halite and other projects of local concern.

Dr Clark requested that regular updates should be provided to the TSB.

RESOLVED

1. The report be received.
2. Officers be directed to consider an awareness raising event for IFCA.
3. Regular updates be provided for Members.

34 TAG UPDATE

Ms Knott reported on a meeting of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) held on 6th October 2011. The TAG group, which met every six months, allowed for an exchange of information between Science and Technical Officers of all IFCA's in England. Other organisations represented on the group were Defra, MMO, NE and Cefas. The tabled report provided the main areas of discussion. The Head of Science at MMO set out data and evidence priorities for the IFCA's and MMO for marine planning. MMO would be looking at the best available science for evidence to inform planning, part of which would be commissioning work on fisheries around the UK. There was an update on MEDIN (Marine Environmental Data and Information Network) on outcomes of work conducted earlier in the year to assess the extent and quality of SFC/IFCA data, using strategic projects such as Navigating the Future to help develop management plans, joint training opportunities, Cefas mapping of inshore fishing effort, and research into bait collection which now fell under the remit of all IFCA's. Concerns were raised on what was classified as bait. The final items discussed was concerns from Kent and Essex IFCA on cockle mortality in the Wash and Burry Inlet, the reason for which had not been found despite research being carried out into the mortalities. Kent and Essex was concerned that vessels and equipment used in the Wash and Burry Inlet fisheries could take unknown parasites or disease into the Thames cockle fishery.

With respect to Cefas mapping of inshore fishing effort, Mr Graham asked how the information on sightings had been gained. Members were informed that the patrol vessel logged every vessel sighted, including recreational sea anglers, and the information was then fed into the MCSS system and sent to Cefas.

RESOLVED. The report be received.

35 COCKLE TRANSPLANTATION TRIAL

The Scientific Officer welcomed visitors Gary Meadows and Maurice De'ath who were the operators working on the cockle transplantation experiment with officers. At the Authority meeting in September, Members had agreed to progress the proposal to transplant seed cockles within the intertidal area at Lytham in the area known as North Run, under the supervision of the TSB Sub-Committee. Since that meeting Officers had discussed the proposals with the operators and a draft method statement for the experiment had been drawn up. The operators had carried out further mapping of the area to look at elevation

levels of the beds to ascertain the position of the cockles and decide which areas would be suitable for transplantation. At the September meeting Prof Frid had asked for an assurance that the activity should be conducted as an experiment and that the design should follow a robust experimental design. Ms Knott pointed out that in view of the time available to progress the project before winter the draft method statement prepared was more of a trial than an experimental design; there were many variables that could compound the result and affect the growth and survival rate of the cockles. Dr Clark suggested that the study should be seen as a model experiment in terms of a starting point and that the Authority could look at other variables it wished to include in the future.

Ms Knott showed slides of the area involved that had been surveyed by the Science Team, the areas surveyed the previous day and those areas considered suitable for transplantation.

Mr Meadows informed Members that the levels from where the existing cockles would be taken and those where the cockles would be transplanted had been checked to make sure levels were the same in order to give the cockles a better chance of survival.

In response to a question from Mrs Owen as to how many seed cockles the operators were hoping to transplant Mr Meadows said an initial figure of 60 tonnes had been agreed. Mrs Butler raised concerns about the possible damage to the cockles being removed and the stress that could be caused to them when going around the drum. Mr Meadows said that the dredge would be set at a size that would enable the smaller cockles to be put back and the speed of the drum would also be reduced to avoid stress. Ms Knott said the project could provide information beneficial to the whole District.

Mr Brown pointed out that this was the first stage of an experiment. Once there was proof that machines could be built that were sufficiently selective to transplant cockles successfully the Authority should perhaps be looking at a more far-reaching experiment. Time was of the essence if the project was to go ahead before the weather changed and he suggested the Authority should encourage progress with the project.

Mr Woods suggested that a better time of year for the project would be spring when the cockles could be relaid at a more weather controlled time of year. Cockle metabolism was starting to slow down at present and what could potentially be a total failure at this time of year could well be a success in the spring. Mr Woods pointed out that on healthy beds cockles moved on their own with the assistance of the tide and it was not known if cockles would successfully relay in areas they did not want to be.

Following further discussion during which Members agreed that the experiment should be supported it was

RESOLVED

1. The report be received.
2. The draft method statement be approved and work to inform a final version be commenced under derogation from Byelaw 1.

The Chief Executive announced that Mr Colin Britton, Enforcement Officer for North Morecambe Bay, would be leaving the IFCA's employment on 19th October. Dr Atkins then made a presentation to Mr Britton and wished him all the best for the future.

36 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The Chairman announced that the meeting would adjourn for lunch and reconvene at 1300.

Ms Ake updated Members on progress with the Sea Angling 2012 project. Cefas had asked IFCA for help with the shore recreational and private boat angling data collection. Funding would be provided by Cefas for the appointment of a surveyor to carry out the data collection work. Cefas had organised a provisional date for training on questionnaires to be used, data entry system, fish identification and general overview of the project. Members were asked whether the NWIFCA should develop its engagement with recreational sea angling stakeholders in the North West perhaps by way of meetings to consult and advise on the sea angling project and other recreational sea angling issues. The Sea Angling Project 2012 would take more of a sampling approach rather than survey. Officers could be asked to assist with additional data collection and it may be appropriate for some officers to attend the training sessions. There were different levels of support for the project across the angling communities. Some groups were supportive while others appeared to be suspicious of the approach. It was felt those differences could affect the effectiveness of the project.

Mr Crawford said the Angling Trust was the national governing body for all angling. It had a marine branch as well as freshwater and game and the Trust was very suspicious about the whole concept of data collection and feared it could be used as a basis to impose a licence on all sea anglers. It was felt that fishermen would be more cooperative if they knew the questions that would be asked of them and were concerned that media reports of good catches in an area tended to attract commercial interest.

Dr Clark suggested that the contentious issues were more in evidence in other parts of the country than in the North West. Mr Crawford agreed the problems were greater in the south where there was more competition with commercial interest for the same species of fish.

Dr Atkins said the project could lead to an assessment of whether more regulation of angling activity was needed. The angling fraternity had become very vociferous and had pushed its way into policy making in recent years. It was quite likely that sea angling would become more regulated in the future as a result of the survey.

Dr Whitfield, ISCZ Project Manager, pointed out that project officers had interviewed fishermen and recreational sea anglers as part of its work. A questionnaire survey design was already available which was fit for purpose. He suggested that with the limited time and resources to the IFCA it should concentrate on building from the knowledge already there in order to begin an initial assessment of how to approach the work. Ms Ake said the design of the questionnaire would come from Cefas who were following a design that had been used in other countries but not in the UK.

In response to a question from Dr Clark as to whether the EA had any work in progress on sea angling, Mr Shields said he was not aware of any such work at present.

Mr Crawford said fishermen in the North Morecambe Bay area cooperating in the ISCZ project had been given an assurance that any information they provided would be treated as confidential and not passed on to commercial interests. A lot of work had already been done in that area and the information was available.

In drawing the discussion to a close Dr Clark said the IFCA looked forward to seeing how the survey developed and to receiving feedback from any engagement with sea fisheries interests. Members would be kept informed on how the project developed.

RESOLVED. The report be received.

The Chairman welcomed Dr Greg Whitfield, IS CZ Project Manager.

Dr Atkins firstly drew attention to the maps shown in the report. The first map identified all the Marine Protected Areas (MPA) within the District. The District had seen a great development not only of MCZ but also European Marine Sites (EMS) under the Habitats and Birds Directives and also an extension announced to RAMSAR sites. The sites were within a concentrated area of sea and not spread evenly throughout the District. Regimes of management measures and regulations that would be applied would be complicated for all and it was felt that sea users would find it difficult to know which sites they were in and which regulations applied, also how bodies such as IF CAs would have the resources to be able to enforce those regulations.

Dr Whitfield outlined the recommendations submitted to government and the current state of the project. In order to guide the work NE and JNCC had produced an Ecological Network Guidance (ENG) which set out key principles on how the project team should conduct work to involve group stakeholders. Three other projects in the North Sea, the South East and South West had also been carried out. The ENG guidance set out targets and principles on how stakeholder groups could identify zones by way of percentages of broad-scale habitats that should be covered in order to create a coherent network of sites. Some of the principles outlined in the ENG were representivity, replication, adequacy and viability. The last principle was best available evidence to use the most up to date and reliable data to inform the stakeholder group's work in order to arrive at a network of sites that had the acceptance of the majority of stakeholders.

In response to a question from the Chairman as to the final total of areas in percentage terms that were proposed for designation Dr Whitfield said including the existing MPAs it was 27%. It was important to distinguish the differences and similarities between EMS and MCZ. MCZs were not looking to overlap any protection in place by the existing MPAs. The first stage was to say how much of habitats were covered by the existing MPAs then aim to make up the rest of the percentage using MCZ.

Mr Jones asked for an explanation of co-location zones. Dr Whitfield said a co-location zone was where the stakeholder group could not reach a conclusion on whether to include the zone as an MCZ because the area included planned and already constructed wind farms. Wind farm developers could not sign up to co-location of the MCZ and the group had prepared a statement to say it believed that the developers should continue their discussions and meetings with MMO, Defra and conservation agencies to come to some mutual agreement. If agreement could be reached the proposed co-location zone would become an MCZ. Mr Graham gave an example of a co-location site off Barrow where wind farms were under construction with some already constructed. Without inclusion of the wind farm there would be a shortfall of 2% of mud habitat. If the wind farm developers and Defra could not reach agreement there could be the temptation for people to say they wanted the shortfall made up.

Dr Whitfield said the percentage of broad-scale habitats needing protection was between 15% and 30%. Many of the habitats were not covered by EMS. MCZ covered a significant amount of ground that were not formerly MPAs and also had more specific features of conservation importance such as blue mussel beds. They were primarily inshore targets for those species not in terms of percentages but in terms of numbers of replicates to be included within the network. The targets were relatively easy to make.

Dr Atkins said there did not seem to be any definition of how big an area needed to be. Dr Whitfield said that came under the viability principle. The minimum dimension of any site that was protecting a broad-scale habitat had to be 5km. For a site to protect a feature of conservation importance the minimum dimension was 500m.

The Chairman asked what sectors were represented on the stakeholder group and in what proportions. Dr Whitfield said the majority of stakeholders represented some form of commercial fishing. There were also representatives from industry, MMO, North West Coastal Forum and recreational sea angling. The group had to try and achieve a balance between conservation, commercial and industry interests such as wind farm developers and oil and gas developers and to reach a compromise between those three key sectors as well as recreational interests.

The Chairman raised concerns that for anyone not part of the stakeholder group it was difficult to understand how the decisions had been reached. The important stakeholders had been identified as conservationists, fishing and industry. Dr Clark said there would be some communities that could not understand how the decisions had been reached and suggested transparency about the decision making was non-existent. It was important for those communities to understand the issues they were being asked to comment on. Dr Whitfield pointed out that the project was not a consultation exercise but a stakeholder participatory planning approach. A formal public consultation would be held and the reasons for site identification were identified in the ISCZ Project final report.

Dr Clark raised the point that protected species such as salmon and sea trout were not on the broad-scale habitats list and had not been included for consideration in the ENG whereas eel and smelt were. She understood those species were partly covered under other legislation such as the Habitats Directive. Dr Whitfield pointed out that the group had no influence on what features were on the list for protection.

In response to a question as to what increase in effort in an area it became an issue Dr Whitfield said his current understanding was that conservation objectives would be reviewed every 6 years. The conservation objective for a site was to maintain it in its current condition. If that situation had changed in six years' time the statutory bodies would need to decide whether to intervene. Dr Atkins confirmed that at the moment conservation objectives were to maintain areas which did not require management measures or other restrictions. The areas had been selected at a time when activity was as low as it could be within the region. If fishing recovered the area would be reviewed and it was likely more restrictions would then be imposed.

Ms Knott asked that if the project was successful, whether plans and projects would need to be examined for designated sites as they were at present in terms of Appropriate Assessments. Dr Whitfield confirmed that having designations in a particular area would mean that any industry proposals for activity within that site would be subject to full Environmental Impact Assessment requirements.

Dr Atkins asked what information the ISCZ team would require in order to complete an informed Impact Assessment. Dr Whitfield said information on perceived qualitative impacts on the fishing fleet as a result of MCZ designations had already been provided for the northern part of the District and it would be useful if that report could be extended and for similar information to be provided for the southern part of the District. The time scale for receipt of the information was tight and Dr Atkins agreed to provide the project team with the required information.

The Chairman drew the discussion to a close and thanked Dr Whitfield for his presentation.

RESOLVED

1. The report be received.
2. Officers to provide the ISCZ Project Team with information on perceived qualitative impacts on the fishing fleet in the southern part of the District to enable them to complete an informed Impact Assessment.

39 SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES REVIEW

The Scientific Officer reported that some progress had been made on the review. The NWIFCA had agreed that a working group should be established in order to plan a workshop to which as many stakeholders as possible would be invited. A working group meeting had been arranged for 28th October and the report identified some of the issues that would be on the agenda for that working group.

RESOLVED. The report be received.

40 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Dr Clark informed Members that the TSB had been requested to set its meetings as far in advance as possible. Dates of the main IFCA meetings for 2012 had been agreed and the sub-committee meetings should tie in with those.

Ms Knott asked if tide times could be taken into account when the dates were being discussed in order to fit these around possible survey times.

Following a discussion it was agreed to hold the next meeting on Friday, 17th February 2012. Officers were directed to make recommendations on dates for TSB Sub-Committee meetings for the remainder of 2012.

RESOLVED

1. The date of the next Technical, Science and Byelaw Sub-Committee be agreed as Friday, 17th February.
2. Officers be directed to make recommendations for sub-committee meeting dates for the remainder of 2012.

41 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. Mr Crawford informed Members he had recently attended a National Grid workshop and Morecambe Bay Partnership meeting where National Grid proposals for potential gridlines from Sellafield and Carlisle or Heysham had been discussed. Seven options had been proposed, three of which were subsea which seemed to be the preferred option. If the subsea option was agreed the cables would not be buried and there were concerns about the effects on the sea bed of the magneto-electric current passing through the cables. Compasses were also likely to be affected. Mr Crawford said the proposals would be open to public consultation. Ms Knott said she had met with National Grid about this issue in the past. Officers had also raised concerns about the subsea option which had been taken into account. Guidance was available for Impact Assessments but not for subsea cables.

Mr Crawford suggested that National Grid should be invited to attend either a meeting of the full IFCA or TSB Sub-Committee. Dr Atkins suggested that Officers should firstly ask the MMO and EA for position statements and their views on the proposals and a decision could then be taken on whether to invite a representative from National Grid to a future meeting.

RESOLVED

The Chief Executive be directed to contact MMO and EA for a position statement on proposals by National Grid for potential gridlines within the District.

2. The Scientific Officer reported on an enquiry she had received from a company looking for a source of large amounts of cockle and scallop shell. Members were asked to provide the Scientific Officer with information of any buyers/producers able to help with this enquiry and she would put them in touch with the company concerned.
3. Ms Knott reported that recreational sea anglers had been found to be landing large numbers of undersized bass from within the Heysham Bass Nursery Area. Members were asked for their views as to whether the Authority should consider introducing a byelaw to govern that activity.

Members agreed that a byelaw was needed to prohibit all forms of angling in that particular area and that Officers should look at drafting a byelaw as a matter of urgency and report back to the sub-committee.

RESOLVED

Officers be directed to draft a byelaw to prohibit all forms of angling within the Heysham Bass Nursery Area and a report be submitted to the next meeting of the TSB Sub-Committee for consideration.

There being no further business the Chairman thanked Members for attending and declared the meeting closed at 1535 hours.