



North Western IFCA
Technical, Science and Byelaws Sub-Committee
18 October 2011
Strathmore Hotel, Marine Road East, Morecambe 10.30 a.m.

Agenda Item: 8

NORTH WESTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY (NWIFCA) **COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

Recommendations

The report be received and any comments or ideas be offered by members.

Summary

1. Officers have undertaken a start on producing a stakeholder communication and engagement strategy. The following document is a review of what is already being undertaken and what is required to create and fulfill the strategy.
 - By April 2012 NWIFCA must develop a stakeholder engagement and communication strategy to allow **Success Criteria 4 'The NWIFCA works in Partnership and is engaged with its stakeholders'** to meet initial targets set –as well as aiding in the work towards additional success criteria - **Success Criteria 7 'IFCAs are recognised and heard'**.
 - A stakeholder engagement strategy should be developed to outline clear procedures on how the NWIFCA will seek to approach its communication and work with stakeholders. Stakeholder engagement is a key part in the regulatory and management aspects of the NWIFCA's role.
 - NWIFCA recognises that it has a large and diverse stakeholder group. A stakeholder is defined as those that have an interest in the NWIFCA and its services. We recognise that we should engage with different stakeholders for different reasons in an appropriate manner and method. Allowing a constructive dialogue, giving all an opportunity to contribute and be heard.
 - We recognise that different stakeholders have different levels of influence on us and have varying areas of interest within the NWIFCA services and roles and as such our engagement will operate at different levels where appropriate. We intend to maintain, improve and develop our relationships with stakeholders and will recognise the changing levels of stakeholder influence in the future as we develop as an IFCA.
 - NWIFCA needs to update all relevant notices, display boards, presentations and any other public media which is to be used.

- NWIFCA needs to create a public relations statement on how it approaches its customer service, comments and feedback. Creates a policy on how formal consultations should be undertaken and delivered. To identify areas of weak engagement and communication and identify solutions.

What Are Stakeholders?

- A stakeholder may be defined as an individual or group that can influence, or be influenced by the Authority's actions. NWIFCA have identified key current stakeholders and maintain a database with contact and relevant information. This data base is updated on a routine basis and the NWIFCA seeks to identify additional and new stakeholders.
- Stakeholders can be defined within broad interest groups within NW IFCA:

Stakeholder Groups	Key Stakeholders
Coastal Commercial Users	Fishing Industry Hand and Boat based, Aggregate Extraction, Renewable Energies, Non Renewable Energies, Cables, Transport Links
Coastal Recreational Users	Anglers, water sports, boat users, Walkers/Ramblers etc
Conservation Groups/Organisations	RSPB, Wildlife Trust, Local and Area Groups, Conservation Management Groups
Other regulatory Bodies	JNCC, GLA, EA Wales, CCW, SEPA, DEFRA, FSA, Marine Scotland, SNH, Crown Estates
Delivery Partners	MMO, NE, CEFAS, EA
Local Authorities	Cumbria, Blackpool, Lancashire, Halton, Wirral, Sefton, Cheshire, Liverpool
Media	Local/National newspapers, TV, Radio,
General Public	Local Communities, Tourists, Local Land Owners
Staff	
NWIFCA Committee Members	

Current NWIFCA External Stakeholders Methods of Communication

Website

- The NWIFCA website can be viewed by those able to access the internet. It is routinely updated and should be continued to be developed to be best used to communicate and inform. The website provides stakeholders and public to ability to contact the NWIFCA with information, requests or feedback. All papers, minutes and agendas of meeting are posted for viewing.

Newsletter

- A newsletter is currently being developed and will be via the website and sent to those who request a hard copy and appropriate partners. Newsletter will be released quarterly. Further work is needed to create a layout and structure. A method of attaining relevant articles and information for publication from appropriate places is required.

Posters/Notices

6. Required information regarding the relevant area/habitat will be posted clearly at any significant access points/suitable notice boards so it can be read and understood. This occurs when it is required.

Annual Plan

7. Reviewed and updated annual and published on the website

Press Releases

8. Compiled and issued when suitable and required to appropriate media groups. All press releases are issued by the Chief Executive and all press enquiries are directed as such.

What Might a Stakeholder Engagement Plan Involve?

9. An engagement plan will outline how NWIFCA staff and members will engage with relevant stakeholders and will identify how NWIFCA is attaining certain success criteria and meeting deadlines for stakeholder engagement. Stakeholders would be identified and the level of appropriate engagement determined and initially this may highlight areas of stakeholders where increased engagement is required or attendance to relevant meetings. The plan may include the following: -

Partnerships/Delivery Partnerships

10. NWIFCA will fulfil its MoU agreements with the relevant agencies where a MoU has been established. The strong stakeholder links which are already established with these agencies should be where possible used as a communication resource which may include pre-existing newsletters, events, meetings or other methods of communication.

Routine Stakeholder Engagement and Customer Service

11. All officers and staff of NWIFCA shall engage with the public and stakeholders in a professional manner. A customer service strategy should be confirmed and continued to allow for stakeholders to have all enquires and information dealt with in a timely fashion. NWIFCA officer currently respond to all enquiries. A clear feedback system should be prepared, to allow stakeholders to provide comments and for NWIFCA to routinely review these to aid in improving service and to deal with any issues which are identified from these comments.

Other Success Criteria Elements

12. The NWIFCA Makes the best use of evidence to deliver its objectives – Providing relevant agreed information to relevant bodies (Success Criteria 5b). The NWIFCA supports and promotes the sustainable management of the marine environment – Develop and implement action plans for communicating and educating coastal communities about sustainable management of the marine environment (Success Criteria 6b)

Consultation Strategy

New Projects – How to develop stakeholder communication and consultation

13. During new projects or where officers need to develop a project through stakeholder engagement. A clear and defined protocol on how the engagement should be approached needs to be developed. This would include assessing the engagement needs of the project, who should be involved and at what level should they be consulted. Several matrixes maybe

of use during this delivery stage (Annex 1 and 2). NWIFCA need to develop clear procedures so an effective, fair and complete consultation process can be undertaken which is fully transparent.

Staff and Members

14. The engagement of staff and members with NWIFCA will be covered in other documents relating to staff and members.

Science and IFCA Officer
6 October 2011