

**NWIFCA Quarterly Meeting:  
24 March 2022: 11.00 a.m.**

**AGENDA  
ITEM NO.  
8**

**Chief Officer Report: December 2021-February 2022**

**Purpose of Report: Information**

**Recommendation: Receive the report**

**Offices**

1. With the Government's removal of Covid regulations, Officers returned to normal working from end February 2022.
2. The Authority 9 December 2021 and TSB 1 February meetings 2022 were held at Truckhaven in Carnforth. The Morecambe Town Hall continues to be unavailable. Future meetings will be held at Truckhaven until further notice.
3. Work to address damp in the Carnforth Office is almost complete. It may be sometime before we can be sure the problem has been solved

**Personnel, Health & Safety, Complaints**

4. The North Western Protector Vessel engineer Mr. Trevor Agnew resigned in October 2021 but remained in post until the end of January 2022 to provide a smooth handover to a new Engineer. Mr Agnew started with the Cumbria Sea Fisheries Committee on 1 Oct 2010. His previous experience was as a service engineer from Finning UK, a main dealer of Caterpillar engines. The Authority extends grateful thanks to Trevor for 11 years' of service.
5. The post of Engineer was advertised in October. Mr Philip Greenop has Naval engineering experience on big ships. He started in Whitehaven in January and has been finding his way around North Western protector.
6. There is also 1 vacancy for a science officer. Recruitment is underway.
7. **Health and Safety** There have been no notifiable incidents up to end of February 2022. The H&S policy continues to be developed and amended to take account of changing circumstances with the advice of the retained H&S consultant.

**8. Complaints**

A response to Mr K. Thompson's complaint against the Authority to the Local Government Ombudsman has been prepared by the Authorities' lawyer will be sent in February.

**Communications and byelaws**

9. The database, website and social media are updated by the Administration team. Social media is moderated by the Clerk. Industry, members and officers are all encouraged to send material of interest to assist development of our external communications. Please let us know what information would be useful to users of these facilities.

10. Issuing of permits and dispensations is kept up to date by the Administration team. Contact the Clerk for specific information. Preparation is underway for introduction of new potting and whelk permits as introduction of the new byelaw 4 is expected imminently.
11. **The byelaw working group** has been established reporting to TSB to develop a new byelaw development strategy to address the remaining byelaws inherited by the Authority from predecessor bodies. This group is led by Mr Moulton and byelaw updates are now provided within the Enforcement reports.
12. **The Annual Plan working group** tasked with refreshing the structure and content of the Authority statutory Annual Plans and Annual Reports last met on 9 March 2022. The 2022 – 23 annual plan as presented to the Authority today and in December is being restructured and the text redrafted by this group. Illustrations will be added and a graphic designer commissioned to suggest a design for the reports. The aim is to have a design for approval at the June meeting.

## Association of IFCA

13. The members Forum of AIFCA met online on 8 March 2021. NWIFCA Chairman and CEO attended. Meeting papers are in the document below. It was agreed that the June 2022 meeting will be held on line and the September meeting at Fishmongers Hall, London. Defra Ministers Mrs. Prentice and Mr Eustace will be invited.



AIFCA MEMBERS  
FORUM MEETING P/

14. A new process for appointing MMO members is now in place. A new recruitment is underway. Application numbers have been disappointing in some areas but new appointments should be possible. It is now agreed that members with 10 years' service will not be routinely reappointed but can reapply. MMO and AIFCA will collaborate to develop new terms of reference for MMO appointees.
15. There is no announcement on the outcome of the SR21 funding bids but Defra have indicated support for a 3 year provision of New Burdens Funding (NBF) for IFCA.. Members commented that NBF has been significantly eroded since 2011 and is now insufficient.
16. The AIFCA budget is healthy with a £30K surplus expected by end March. Net Assets are £129K and reserves are £130K. In the 2022-23 budget there is provision to employ another officer and a Defra grant for project work will be made available which AIFCA will distribute and monitor.
17. A report by the AIFCA Chief Officer on KPI and Metrics for monitoring of IFCA by Defra is in the meeting pack. Development of these indicators is expected to be a significant area of work for AIFCA in coming months.
18. Further information on the work of the AIFCA and meeting papers can be obtained from the Chief officer: [Robert.clark@association-ifca.org.uk](mailto:Robert.clark@association-ifca.org.uk) The website is <http://www.association-ifca.org.uk/> IFCA. Members can sign into a password protected members area .

## Defra

19. **MAFCO**. 26 January 2022. Papers are marked sensitive by Defra. The following are the main outcomes of interest o IFCA:
  - I. After the first year of the Government's Regional Fisheries Groups (RFG), IFCA were invited to comment on their usefulness. IFCA's comments were generally critical because the groups are not well balanced and not well moderated. They give excessive voice to a few interests

who dominate proceedings. Attendance is unregulated and behavior gives cause for concern. Fishers understandably attend to advance their personal interests but this does not lead to constructive discussion. IFCA have been excessively and wrongly criticized for their policies and decisions. Attendees have an incorrect understanding of fisheries regulations. At the last NWRFG, NWIFCA was criticized and unfairly blamed for the decline in fisheries in the region while a proposal from MMO for research into the state of fisheries in the region to identify causes and solutions was harshly attacked by fishers. IFCA indicated they may not attend these groups if attendees do not take a more constructive approach.

- II. No further information on the spending review was available.
- III. A report on the proposed Fisheries Management plans suggested an FMP for Bass could be an early priority. The purpose, content and structure of FMP remains unclear
- IV. Defra gave an introduction to the UK Joint Fisheries Statement and consultation. The Authority could respond to the consultation but with the wide range of views and objectives held by members, it is not clear what line the NWIFCA would. If members would like the Authority to respond, please supply ideas for the content to the Clerk.
- V. Defra indicated that there will be a consultation on HPMA (Highly protected marine areas) in 2022. Consultation sites have not yet been published.

#### **RPA review of NWIFCA Policies, Procedures and Governance**

- 20. In December 2021, North West Employers were asked to investigate serious allegations listed on the last page of the RPA report. An initial report of their investigations was received by the Authority and sent to the Chairman in February 2022.
- 21. A review of the findings of the RPA review report has been done by officers and sent to the Finance and Personnel committee for a meeting on 21 March 2022. A verbal update from that meeting may be given by the Chairman at the meeting on 24 March.
- 22. The public will be excluded from any discussion of the RPA and subsequent NWE reports.

**CEO NWIFCA 9<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

