

# NWIFCA Quarterly Meeting

## 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020; 10.30 a.m.

# AGENDA

## ITEM

### 11

### CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 2019-20 October – December 2019

**Purpose of Report: Information**

**Recommendations:**

1. **Receive the report**

**This report covers:**

- I. **Personnel, Health & Safety**
- II. **Communications**
- III. **Association of IFCA**
- IV. **Defra**
- V. **Byelaw update**
- VI. **NWIFCA review**

#### **I. Personnel, Health and Safety**

1. Mrs Irene Andrews is retiring from her post as Clerk on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2020 after 31 years' service. This will be her last meeting of the Authority. Irene has maintained the smooth running of the office for 3 decades while working with 5 Chief Officers with no doubt very different styles and temperaments. Her calm quiet approach to getting work done has been invaluable in helping to steer me through all sorts of unexpected events and minor crises including 2 office relocations and restructuring of Sea Fishery Committees to IFCA in 2010.
2. Irene is a repository for the history of NWIFCA going back even further than her period in the job. She has meticulously maintained the archives and records of the Sea Fisheries Committee. This resource of information in her memory will be greatly missed. I cannot count the number of times I have appealed to Irene for the background to some query or decision that we have to take.
3. The Authority also extends thanks to Mr Calum Booth who resigned in January 2020 for his 5 years' service as an MMO appointee. Calum provided very useful contributions to the Authority from his ornithological knowledge and expertise and as an officer of the RSPB.
4. In January 2020 Cumbria County Council announced that Cllr Mark Wilson would replace Cllr Keith Little as one of their NWIFCA members, The Authority thanks Cllr Little for his 7 years' service 2013-2020.
3. In February 2020 Liverpool City Council announced that NWIFCA member 2015-2020 Cllr Jim Noakes would be replaced by Cllr Sharon Connor. The Authority thanks Cllr Noakes for his 5 years' service.
4. Science Advisor Tom Brook resigned in December to take a post with the Scottish Association for Marine Science in Oban Argyle. He had only been with NWIFCA Science team for about 6 months but felt the SAMS position was more suited to his career aims. We wish him success.
5. IFCO Jason Sparks based in Whitehaven, resigned in January to take up a fisheries officer post in St Helena. His experience with NWIFCA has given him the knowledge and expertise

to win this post. The Authority extends thanks for his 6 years' service and wishes him every success.

6. The post of Clerk and Office manager post will be advertised as soon as possible for a replacement. Applications have been received for the science advisor and IFCO posts advertised for replacements in February.
7. The number of MMO appointee vacancies is now 4 although MMO interviews in January are expected to result in 4 replacement members as soon as appointments have been confirmed.
8. MMO has also agreed to extend the terms of office of some members who will complete 10 years as MMO appointees in October 2020. Up to now MMO stated that 10 years was the maximum possible term of office. However in recognition of the restriction this limit could place on the effective functioning of IFCA and the scarcity of alternative candidates with suitable experience and qualifications, MMO have indicated that the limit may be relaxed in exceptional circumstances. IFCA Chairmen have been invited to request extensions for members whose loss would have a negative impact on the capacity of the Authority to carry out its duties. Three NWIFCA MMO appointees will complete 10 years' service in 2020.
9. There were no reportable H&S incidents this quarter. Updating the H&S policy continues with advice of our retained H&S consultant.
10. There are no outstanding complaints against NWIFCA.

## **II. Communications**

11. Members training: The Authority has 2 new Council members as above and expects 4 new MMO appointees soon. Plans are in place to offer members awareness raising sessions in relevant parts of the District with field visits to show the work of NWIFCA in that area. New members will be invited to attend this training.
12. The first of these events will take place in the south of the District as soon as a date can be arranged. If you would like to attend or would be interested in a training event in your part of the District please inform the Office by phone or email.
13. A 1 hour training session is proposed to take place prior to the next quarterly meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> June at 10.00 in Morecambe Town Hall, with the quarterly meeting starting at 11.00. Officers will give short presentations about the policies, governance, procedures and work of the Authority.
14. The website has been upgraded to the latest version of Wordpress with more analytics features.
15. Bass posters have been put up around the district and advertised on social media.
16. Cefas is running an American Lobster awareness campaign and has provided materials for Officers to pass on. IFCA's are also assisting by sharing the materials on social media and their websites.
17. One Environmental Information Request was received during the quarter and was handled within the statutory time.

## **III Association of IFCA**

18. Members Forum and Directors meetings were held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020. Minutes of December 2019 meeting are at Annex A.

19. With sadness I must report the death of the AIFCA Administration officer Mrs Sally Standing in December 2019 after an extended illness. The Authority sends condolences to her husband and family.
20. The AIFCA Director Dr Stephen Bolt has resigned and will leave his post on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2020. The AIFCA and NWIFCA are most grateful to Dr Bolt for 9 years' service to the Association.
21. With both AIFCA posts vacant there is an opportunity to review the structure and remit of the AIFCA. Questions about how the AIFCA delivers its purpose have led to splits in membership and a review of AIFCA which concluded in 2018 made proposals which are under consideration. Salary scales and pay increases have made the current budget inadequate so adjustment is needed. The Chief Executive will in future be titled Executive officer with a slightly reduced salary, a more structured job description has been proposed and a group of AIFCA Executive Directors will manage the AIFCA work programme more closely.
22. Directors are making plans to recruit the Executive officer by open competition. Advertised information will be circulated to members and put on the NWIFCA website. No decision has been taken on the Administration Officer post.
23. In the meantime, IFCA's will provide cover to continue delivery of core functions including running the 4 meetings per year and providing points of contact for Defra and other partner bodies.
24. NWIFCA Chairman Councillor Paul Williams has agreed to provide financial monitoring for the remainder of this financial year.

#### **IV Defra**

25. **Evaluation of IFCA by Risk Policy Analysts (RPA):** No further information about this contract has been released since the last meeting. It is still expected to be published soon.
26. **The Spending review 2019 (SR 19)** has now become SR20 and been delayed until after the election. A roll over of IFCA new burdens funding is likely but not yet formally announced.
27. **Election and Brexit:** Following the election in December, the Fisheries Minister George Eustace has moved to the post of Secretary of State for Environment food and Rural Affairs. The Fisheries Minister, titled Parliamentary under Secretary of State at Defra is Victoria Prentice MP. She describes herself as having a farming and rural background and does not appear to have had previous fisheries experience.
28. The Fisheries Bill has been given high priority by the new Government. It received second reading in the House of Lords on 11<sup>th</sup> February and is expected to become law by summer 2020 ending the automatic right of EU vessels to fish in UK waters in preparation for the end of the transition out of the EU by 31 December 2020.
29. It seems clear that fisheries will be a very significant point of tension in the Brexit negotiations. The EU aims to maintain the entire CFP management structure intact, while UK position as they become an independent coastal state is to control and regulate all access to its coastal waters. UK states it will refuse to maintain the longstanding quota system in favour of management which takes much better account of where fish are found.
30. **Mobile Catch App.** Fishers will be aware of the controversy and technical problems surrounding the catch return app recently introduced as a legal requirement by MMO for under 10m vessels. The app has quickly become unpopular with users and there is a growing move to have the app scrapped. This Authority recognises the importance of improved catch return data to inform management and has included catch return provisions

in recent new byelaws which have been satisfactory. It may be more useful to have specific byelaw catch return provisions which can be better targeted at each type of fishery.

## V Byelaw update

31. **Cockle and mussel Byelaw 3; Potting permit byelaw 4:** The statutory consultations on these byelaws ended on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2019. There were 14 responses to the cockle and mussel byelaw and 16 objections to the Potting byelaw. All responses were considered and replies from the Authority were sent.
32. **Cockle and mussel permit Byelaw 3** was sent for to MMO for confirmation on 16<sup>th</sup> January. MMO acknowledged receipt and provided a target deadline for their response of 25<sup>th</sup> February. On 25<sup>th</sup> February detailed comments were received. The byelaw will be edited and resubmitted to MMO for confirmation.
33. **Potting permit byelaw 4.** Necessary changes were identified in the consultation. The revised byelaw is on the agenda for today.
34. **Minimum Conservation Reference Size (MCRS) Byelaw.** A complete draft is presented to the Authority today. This has been given high priority for completion as explained in the report.
35. **Byelaw review:** TSB Chairman and Vice Chairman requested a meeting with officers to discuss future byelaw priorities which was held on 19<sup>th</sup> December. Outcomes are recorded in TSB minutes

## VI NWIFCA Review

36. The NWIFCA review specification was agreed by the NWIFCA Review Committee in January. Formal quotations were invited from 5 firms using an ITQ procurement template kindly provided by Lancashire County Council.
37. Quotations were received by the time limit of 24<sup>th</sup> February from RPA (Risk Policy Analysts) and North West Employers. These quotations are being assessed against the criteria set out in the ITQ. The contract to undertake the review should be offered before the end of March

### Main meetings attended 3rd quarter

24 <sup>th</sup> September	AIFCA London
15 <sup>th</sup> -16 <sup>th</sup> October	Chief Officers Group Chichester
18 <sup>th</sup> October	MMO (dial in) re member recruitment & Brexit planning
5 <sup>th</sup> November	TSB Morecambe
12 <sup>th</sup> November	NIMEG (JM attended)
14 <sup>th</sup> November	AIFCA (dial in) Future structure of AIFCA
3 <sup>rd</sup> December	AIFCA London (minutes at Annex A)
5 <sup>th</sup> December	NWIFCA Finance and Quarterly Morecambe
19 <sup>th</sup> December	TSB Chair and Vice Chair re byelaws Carnforth

**CEO and Communication Officer**  
**10<sup>th</sup> March 2020)**

## ANNEX A

### **Minutes of last meeting The Association of IFCA's Members Forum Meeting 3 December 2019 – 10:30 Followed by Directors Meeting Watermen's Hall, 16-18 St Mary at Hill, London, EC3R 8EF**

Attendance: Chair: Tony Tomlinson CEO: Stephen Bolt

Members: Tim Dapling, Mike Hardy, Paul Williams, David McCandless, Paul Skinner, Les Weller, Stephen Atkins, Chris Matthews, John Lamb, Will Wright, Samantha Davis, Julian Gregory, Stuart Harper, John Lamb.

Minutes: Samantha Davis

Apologies for absence: Andy Guy, Tom Hooper, John Humphreys, Sally Standring, Rob Clark, Stephen Axford, Sally Standring.

The Chair stated that the meeting would be recorded.

No declarations of interest.

1. **Minutes of the last meeting (24 September 2019)** were agreed.

**a. Matters arising**

Action 1: MCRS Byelaws: There has been an exchange of emails between RC and Defra, not resolved. Four IFCA's have begun the process of replacing emergency minimum size byelaws with permanent ones.

Action 2: Not known.

Action 3: To be covered under agenda item 2 below.

Action 4: SB had spoken with Emma at NIFCA.

Action 5: JG had circulated paper as requested.

Action 6: SB/RC have written/spoken with Defra.

Discussion of reappointment of MMO general members and the impact of the current 10 year rule. Issues raised:

1. sensitivity of involving Chief Officers in the selection of members to recommend for extension,
2. the lack of parity in the length of tenure of some councilors,
3. the difficulties of advocating one member over another if all of equal merit and value but the recognition that we need to respond to this request as Defra will not allow a blanket reappointment of all members.

There was recognition and agreement that there were two strands to this issue – a short term need to solve the cliff edge in members' reappointment in 2020 and the need for a longer term solution which enabled IFCA's to operate effectively.

**Action 1: All to send assessment spreadsheet back to SB.**

**2. Defra update** (via SB as Defra staff not invited to attend – see notes in agenda)

Questions were raised about when we may receive confirmation of the new burdens funding for 2020/21 and the implications if we do not receive this funding, and comments raised about continuing delay over the publication of the IFCA 10 year review report.

### 3. Finance & Resources

- a. Profit and Loss – first quarter
- b. Budget variation

Discussion over 4a and 4b – offer from PW to fill resource gaps between financial reporting generated by SB and the requirements for the audit, in order to reduce audit costs to AIFCA. PW also suggested having separate lines in the budget for one off, non-recurring items, to help clarify their impact on the budget.

#### **Action 2 : SB to speak to PW regarding audit process and to amend budget lines for non-recurring items.**

Suggestions made to reduce meeting costs including the use of Webex teleconferencing platform and the possibility of obtaining more free meetings at Fishmongers' Hall above the two currently being offered.

#### **Action 3: SB to investigate feasibility and costs for using teleconferencing for some AIFCA Members' Forum meetings in 2020.**

### 4. Matters for decision (not taken in order of agenda)

#### **4c National Lead Training Officer workstream update (paper by Will Wright/Ian Jones):**

Discussion around the possibility of an EMFF bid for funding to deliver a 3 year training plan, in preparation by WW and Ian Jones (IJ). There were concerns about resilience in the longer term beyond this funding source. Bid due in before Christmas and if successful, costs of Torquay course could be reclaimed. If unsuccessful, WW will bring back alternative funding proposals to March 2020 Members Forum. WW highlighted other solutions to fund the role including use of NTLO to deliver training for other organisations and the possibility of his use as a floating enforcement officer for use to temporarily increase capacity at individual IFCA's. IJ will develop training packages for individual IFCA's.

Recommendations from NLTO update paper - that AIFCA Forum members:

1. AGREE the 2020 NLTO training fees and funding structure, as set out in section 1.2,
2. AGREE the proposed model of underwriting the NLTO post in section 2,
3. AGREE the long-term fiscal strategy for the NLTO post in section 5,
4. DISCUSS and NOTE the feedback from the advanced officer course and the proposed new courses to be run over the next 3 years.

**Recommendations above were agreed, with the proviso that the budget could be reprofiled without reliance on EMFF, all voted in favour, no abstentions.**

#### **4a. Paper on the review of the Association (JG, on behalf of Task Group)**

JG introduced update paper and drew attention to two recently developed options on p4 under recommendation 1 from 3KQ report – Option 1 reduces the number of directors to four and attaches specific duties to each to improve logistical effectiveness of running organisation, with strategic decisions taken at the Members' Forum where all 10 IFCA's are represented. Further suggestion from RC (via JG) that this could be expanded to five to include Operations Director. Question also rose over having Chief Executive as a director. Option 2 offers an alternative model to operating as a company, by having AIFCA hosted by an IFCA, to improve resilience and reduce costs.

Points raised included differing views on who should be a director, the interrelationship between the directors and the Members Forum and the importance of following the recommendations set out in the paper. There was a recognition that additional detailed work would be required to flesh out the potential implementation of the options in the paper. A suggestion was made that SB should join the Task Group.

#### **4b 2020/21 budget proposals**

Points raised included the possibility of ceasing to insure the shared survey equipment through the AIFCA and passing that responsibility onto those IFCA's who use the equipment.

Following further discussion around issues raised regarding salary level for Chief Executive, a proposal was made and agreed to defer the decision on setting the budget until the March 2020 meeting.

**Action 5: Paper on 2020/21 budget to be submitted to March 2020 Members' Forum meeting.**

#### **5. Matters for noting**

- a. **MPA project update (report) – p 18** Report noted.
- b. **MPA project Steering Group minutes – Page 19** Report/minutes noted.
- c. **iVMS verbal update – Julian Gregory** JG has made representation to MMO project team about concerns over the potential use of mobile phones for reporting and the lack of tamper-free technology.
- d. **CEO Meeting Log – Page 23** Noted.
- e. **Directors minutes - Page 25** Noted and agreed.
- f. **Association Annual Report 2018/19** Report noted.
- g. **Provisional dates for 2020** Dates noted, venues not yet finalised.

#### **6. AOB**

TD reported that he had dialed into recent Angling Trust national angling strategy board meeting and reminded all COs that we have a tracker for this strategy so if we are doing work within our IFCA's that contribute to this strategy, to let TD know so he can feed that information back.

**Action 6: All to update TD of any relevant sea angling work to feed into national angling strategy.**

Close of meeting 15:30

**Date of next meeting – Tuesday 3 March 2020, venue tba.**

	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Whom</b>
1	Action 1: All to send general members assessment spreadsheet back to SB	All
2	SB to speak to PW regarding audit process and to amend budget lines for non-recurring items.	SB/PW
3	Action 3: SB to investigate feasibility and costs for using teleconferencing for some AIFCA Members' Forum meetings.	SB/LW
4	Action 4: SB speak to Fishmongers' Hall regarding its availability to us without cost.	SB
5	Action 5: Paper on 2020/21 to be submitted to March 2020 Members' Forum.	SB
6	Action 6: All to update TD of any relevant sea angling work to feed into national angling strategy.	All

## Annex B: Update from Defra Feb 2020

Dear Colleague,

Please find Defra's latest Marine and Fisheries update below.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson appoints new ministers to Defra

- George Eustice has been appointed as Secretary of State and will have overall responsibility for the Department.
- Victoria Prentis has been appointed as a Parliamentary Under Secretary of State.
- Rt Hon Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park has been appointed as Minister of State.
- Rebecca Pow will continue as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State.
- Lord Gardiner of Kimble will continue as the Lords Minister.

Ministerial portfolios have not been confirmed as yet, however returning ministers are expected to have broadly similar roles, with Victoria Prentis expected to take on George Eustice's previous role.

More information can be found on [www.gov.uk/defra](http://www.gov.uk/defra).

### Second Reading for Fisheries Bill

Two weeks after its introduction, the legislation that will give us the powers to implement an independent fisheries policy has moved a step forward. Lords' Minister, Lord Gardiner, led the Second Reading of the Fisheries Bill in the House of Lords on Tuesday 11th February. Main issues raised during the reading included the Government's commitment to and definition of sustainability, collaboration with the devolved administrations and future fishing quota allocation.

The next step in the progress of the Bill is the Committee stage (a line by line examination), which will take place in the House of Lords on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March.

For more information please read the Press Release on the Defra website [here](#), or track the progress of the Fisheries Bill on [parliament.uk](http://parliament.uk).

### Public Consultation on UK Import Tariffs

The Department for International Trade is preparing the UK's first independent tariff policy in almost fifty years. This [Most Favoured Nation \(MFN\)](#) tariff will enter into force on 1 January 2021. A consultation has therefore been launched to inform our own Most Favoured Nation tariff schedule, the UK Global Tariff.

The consultation offers you the opportunity to provide:

- views on a potential series of amendments to the Common External Tariff to create a bespoke UK tariff, specifically: simplifying and tailoring the UK Global Tariff policy, removing tariffs on goods imported by UK businesses to manufacture other goods, and where the UK has zero or limited domestic production
- specific feedback on specific products or commodity codes of importance to you, including on the corresponding tariff rate



- information on your interactions with MFN tariffs and the importance of tariffs to your sectors.

More information on how to take part in the consultation can be found on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk). The consultation closes on Thursday 5 March

#### Freeports Consultation

As part of its work to boost economic activity across the UK, the government aims to create up to 10 Freeports in locations across the UK

The government has the following objectives for UK Freeports:

- Establish Freeports as national hubs for global trade and investment across the UK.
- Promote regeneration and job creation.
- Create hotbeds for innovation.

The Department for International Trade has launched a consultation to understand your thoughts on the UK's plans for Freeports, visit [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk). The consultation is open until Monday 20 April.

#### Commercial Designations of Fish List update

Seafood processors should be aware that the UK Commercial Designations of Fish List has recently been updated to include the Greenland cockle (*Serripes groenlandicus*) and the Argentinian red shrimp (*Pleoticus muelleri*).

Commercial designations must be used when marketing fish in the EU and are provided to consumers at the point of retail.

Kind regards,

Joanna Higgins

Stakeholder Engagement and Briefing Hub

Marine and Fisheries

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