

NWIFCA Annual Meeting
28th June 2018: 11.00 a.m.

AGENDA
ITEM NO.
12

SUMMARY REPORT - TECHNICAL, SCIENCE AND BYELAW
SUB-COMMITTEE – 15th May 2018

1. **Matters Arising (Agenda Item 4):** Members of industry passed on their concerns that the recent crab and lobster stock report had increased fishing effort in certain locations. This raises the problem of putting information in the public domain having unintended consequences and might make industry less likely to share information.
2. **New Patrol Vessel (Agenda Item 5):** Members were updated on progress made towards the vessel and dedication ceremony. The CEO invited suggestions from members of who should be invited to the naming and dedication ceremony.
3. **iVMS (Agenda Item 6):** Members were informed about the iVMS project and concerns about the potential financial impact the project may have on the IFCA. A report on the subject will be discussed at this meeting.

Members moved for the subject to be discussed by the finance committee with a recommendation brought forward to the full Authority.

4. **Science Summary Report (Agenda Item 7)**

The report covered:

- a) Marine Protected Areas in the NWIFCA District
- b) St. Bees Voluntary Code of Conduct
- c) NWIFCA Research Projects
- d) North West Marine Plan
- e) Halite Gas Storage (Preesall) and Marine Monitoring Group
- f) Wyre Power Station
- g) TAG - IFCA Technical Advisory Group
- h) Invasive Non-Native Species and Biosecurity Workshop

Members approved the report.

5. **PhD Funding Proposal (Agenda Item 8):** The Senior Scientist approached Lancaster Environment Centre at Lancaster University to discuss NWIFCA involvement in PhD opportunities. Of particular interest was a proposal to use satellite and remote sensing imaging to further investigate the shifting sandbanks and channels in the Bay and their impact on the ecology of the Bay focusing particularly on cockle and mussel fishery resources. Two possible funding options were presented; a studentship which would require NWIFCA to contribute £23,600 over 3.5 years or the possibility of ENVISION funding which would require a contribution of £4000-£5000 per year.

Members moved to not proceed with the PhD proposal laid out in the report.

6. **MPA Monitoring (Agenda Item 9):** A final version of the MPA Monitoring and Control Plan was presented to members for discussion. Beyond staff time (both enforcement and science) the implementation of the Plan will not bring any additional cost.

Members approved the plan and committing staff time to ensure the Plan is fully implemented and effective.

7. **Byelaw Review: Potting Permit Byelaw (Agenda Item 10):** A flexible permit potting byelaw which incorporates all species for which potting currently occurs has been drafted by the Senior Scientist and circulated internally. A draft was not presented to the TSB as the Senior Scientist was still incorporating the comments of Officers.

Members approved the report and the approach taken through a specified species flexible permitting potting permit byelaw. A draft copy of the byelaw will be circulated to TSB members via email.

8. **Byelaw Review: Netting (Agenda Item 11):** The review of the netting byelaws is currently in the very early stages. A proposed approach was presented to the TSB by the Head of Enforcement including implementing a flexible permit byelaw similar to Devon and Severn IFCA's and a consultation with industry.

Members approved the approach for further development.

9. **Razor Clam Research Call for Interest Update (Agenda Item 12):** Three companies came forward following the call for interest. Science officers held a meeting with the companies in May 2018 to discuss ways to progress collaborative research into razor clam fisheries in the district. A list of actions was drawn up, the first being to gain the approval of TSB to develop the work.

Members approved the work of Officers to develop a research project with industry.

10. **Cockle and Mussel Fisheries Report (Agenda Item 13):** The report covered cockles at Leasowe, Penfold North, Pilling Sands and Flookburgh, and mussels at Heysham Flat, South America/Falklands, Low Bottom and Foulney Ditch and Foulney. Annex A provided a full update on cockle and mussel surveys and inspections.

Members approved maintaining the seasonal closure at Penfold North.

11. **Cockle and Mussel Fisheries Enforcement Report (Agenda Item 14):** The quantities removed from the cockle and mussel fisheries within the district were provided to members. Returns compliance remained an issue with varying sanctions being taken including permit suspensions. Officers discovered a large quantity of undersize cockle at Pilling in the possession of a merchant. The HoE highlighted that current provisions within Byelaw 3 are inadequate to deal with this situation.

Members approved the report.

12. **Cockles in NWIFCA District - History of MLS Management (Agenda Item 15):** Cockle MLS has been incorporated into regulations since at least 1884 in Lancashire SFC District and since 1956 in the Cumbria SFC District. The original justifications for the MLS are not known but the cockle MLS has been consistently set around a 20mm square gauge. Until research is carried out it would be risky to remove the MLS without evidence to inform alternative management measures.

Members approved the report.

13. **Byelaw Review: Byelaw 3 (Agenda Item 16):** Legal advice has been received from the MMO that it is not within the IFCA's powers to regulate cockle and mussel fisheries with trader permits. However, the need for further controls once cockles are removed from the bed was highlighted at Pilling when a large container of undersized cockles was found with no one admitting ownership. As a solution a measure in the byelaw to require owner identification on containers with cockles for transportation away from the fishery could be added to the byelaw.

Members approved a new draft of the byelaw be prepared without provision for a trader permit but with measures to require identification on containers into which shellfish are put for transport away from the fishery.

Digital Communications Officer
13th June 2018