

NWIFCA Quarterly Meeting

5th December 2019; 11.00 a.m.

AGENDA

ITEM

9

CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT 2nd quarter

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**

I. **Personnel, Health and Safety**

1. **Mr Jack Manning**, well-known fisherman from Flookburgh North Morecambe Bay passed away on 8 November aged 86. Jack followed his father Harold into membership of the Lancashire and Western Sea Fisheries Committee (predecessor to NWIFCA) in the 1970s. Jack was associated with fishing almost all his life and his knowledge of Morecambe Bay is legendary. Much of that experience is described in his book 'It was better than working' available from <http://jackmanning.co.uk/index.html>. The Authority offers sympathy to Jack's son NWIFCA member Mr Stephen Manning and family many of whom continue the fishing tradition.
2. There have been no reportable H&S incidents this quarter. Updating the H&S policy continues with advice of our retained H&S consultant.
3. There are no outstanding complaints against NWIFCA.
4. There were no changes in staff or members this quarter.
5. The Authority continues to have 3 vacancies for MMO appointees. MMO have announced a recruitment to start in December with interviews to be held in the Carnforth office in January. Members are asked to consider if they know of potential candidates who can be directed to the MMO website if they wish to apply.
6. MMO has also agreed to extend the terms of office of 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. The terms of any extension are not yet released. Three NWIFCA MMO appointees are in this position.

II. **Communications**

7. Bass posters have been put up around the district advertising the move to catch and release only for recreational fishers. The Facebook post received an extremely wide reach with over 85,000 views and 20,000 interactions. The post was shared in Germany and

Belgium, where the measures also apply. It also caused some confusion in Spain where the measures don't apply, leading to the Oceanographic Institute of Malaga issuing a clarifying statement. Praise was received from Northumberland IFCA who have adopted the same poster design for their district.

8. Invitations have been sent to councilors from the Wirral area to meet with their local fisheries officers for a tour of the area. This is later than initially planned due to initial uncertainty of how heavily prosecuted the Leasowe fishery would be.
9. Two environmental Information requests have been received this quarter. Both relate to the use of VMS data in prosecutions and were answered within the 20 working day time frame.

IV Association of IFCA

10. The last meetings of AIFCA Forum and Directors were held on 24th September in London. Chairman and CEO attended. Draft minutes are at Annex A

IV Defra

11. **Evaluation of IFCA by Risk Policy Analysts (RPA):** The report of this commercial contract commissioned by Defra has not yet been published. Defra now report that publication has been delayed until 2020 and there is no commitment to give IFCA a pre-publication opportunity to comment.
12. 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.
13. Most new announcements and many external meetings have been delayed until after the election.

V Byelaw update

14. Cockle and mussel Byelaw; Potting permit byelaw: The statutory consultations on these byelaws ended on 9 November 2019. There were 14 responses to the cockle and mussel byelaw and 16 objections to the Potting byelaw. All responses are being considered and will receive replies from the Authority. Once objections have been addressed, the Authority will seek confirmation of the byelaws from Defra.

Main meetings attended 2nd quarter

19 July	IFCA Technical Advisory Group London (Science attended)
16 July	Chief Officer's group London
25 July	Northumberland vessel launch
1 Aug	Chief Officers group phone conference
6 Aug	TSB
13 Sept	NWIFCA quarterly
18 Sept	Defra phone conference Brexit prep
24 Sept	AIFCA London
26Sept	Aquaculture review group Phone conference Science attended
26 Sept	Defra Brexit planning event Fleetwood

**CEO and Communication Officer
30 August 2019**

ANNEX A

The Association of IFCAs Members Forum Meeting 24 September 2019 – 10:30 Followed by Directors Meeting The Passage, Cathedral View, St Vincent's Centre, Carlisle Place, London SW1P 1NL

Attendance: Chair: Tony Tomlinson (Les Weller - Acting Chair until Tony arrived at 10:50 due to travel delays). CEO: Stephen Bolt

Attendance: Andy Guy, Tim Dapling, Mike Hardy, Paul Williams, Robert Clark, Samantha Davis, David McCandless, Paul Skinner, Les Weller, Stephen Atkins, Stephen Axford, Chris Matthews, John Lamb.

Minutes: Samantha Davis

Apologies for absence: Stuart Harper, Tom Hooper, John Humphreys, Sally Standing.
No declarations of interest.

1. Minutes of the last meeting (4 June 2019) –agreed.

a. Matters arising from actions

Action 1: Done, new system has been adopted.

Action 2: AIFCA paper has been sent to A. Wareing at MMO, response promised within a week currently two weeks late. Concerns raised that this issue is still not resolved and acknowledgment of impacts on most IFCAs, e.g .loss of 65% members of DSIFCA, CIFCA. Examples provided by members about the delays in the issuing of reappointment letters and inconsistencies in terms of appointment.

Action 3: Done.

Action 4: On agenda. WW confirmed that pension and NI costs have been included in budget for training officer but post doesn't follow Kent CC paygrades.

Action 5: English Fisheries Group (EA stakeholders group) – RC – matters overtaken by recent EA/IFCA meeting, should be useful mechanism for future engagement.

Action 6: Done.

Action 7: Clarification provided that new IFCO powers SI was not affected by prorogation. Thanks recorded to Dominic Bailey at KEIFCA for his work on SI text.

RC reported that Defra impossible to engage with regarding impact of new tech. con. legislation on management of recreational fisheries but he will follow up again with Defra. Discussion followed over range of approaches taken in different IFCAs, based upon local prioritisation/risk. TD reported that at meeting with Angling Trust, it had been useful to communicate reasons leading to a variation in approach around the coast. JL felt that AIFCA should still write to Defra to voice concern over the need for a national steer.

Action 1 : AIFCA to write again to Defra regarding impact of new EU technical conservation regulation on the management of recreational fishing.

Further discussion followed on the wider issue of the management of recreational sea angling (RSA) within the wider context of the forthcoming Fisheries Bill and inshore fisheries conference. TD and SB had been involved in a Defra/AIFCA meeting about angling policy and delivery and Defra were holding a RSA Stakeholder Group meeting on 7 October, to look at policy drivers, to which LW had been invited. LW made point that Defra was using the term recreational sea fishing (RSF) and it would appear that there are

two separate groups - one group containing all métiers (spear fishing, hand gathering etc.) and another looking specifically at hook and line., a distinction that needs clarification. The former group may be more relevant to certain IFCAs for e.g. in NEIFCA which issues 2500 recreational shellfish permits.

2. Defra update (Natalie Bown (NB), Anne Harkness-Moore (AH), Jen Ashworth (JA), Rachel Muckle (RM), Martina de Fonzo (MF)

MF moving to new role and due to Defra re-structuring, NB and AH will attend and be key contact into Defra, RM liaises with Neil Hornby and across Defra marine systems.

Marine and Fisheries update (RM)

Spending Review (SR) 19 process beginning in September and is one year spending round (not 'review'). All departments know overall allocation but internal bidding underway, Treasury have set out rollover budget as per 2019/20, giving time to consider before next 3 yr spending review. There is a slight uplift but big pressures and some Treasury ring fences. Assumption is currently that Treasury will call 3 year SR in Jan 2020 but could be 5yr SR. Defra will need to think through delivery, arm's length bodies etc.

Questions raised included the timetable for confirmation of New Burdens rollover – RM stated that this was very soon and would confirm with us ASAP. Also question regarding the allocation of Brexit no-deal contingency funding – RM confirmed that there were two funding streams - business as usual and EU Exit but there was blurring between them and that operational projects for EU exit being delivered by MMO.

WW emphasised that IFCAs were doing more through JMOC, alongside other partners including Borger Force and RM questioned if this may be a proxy for new ways of working and future roles post Brexit.

RC mentioned that a range of tasks were being asked of IFCAs in parallel to our day jobs and that it would be helpful to present this to Defra via RM in a coordinated fashion to provide clarity for Defra. NB agreed to help with this co-ordination. WW raised issue about the importance of prioritisation of tasks in the short/medium/long term and how priorities may change for Defra as this has an impact on our delivery as a lot of resources have been front loaded into short term which is now creating issues with staffing time left available to IFCAs.

Action 2 : RC to write to Natalie Bown with list of tasks.

Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMA) Project (JA)

JA gave background. Confirmed that stakeholder visits had been held in Lyme Bay, Isle of Arran and two more planned for Poole Harbour/Plymouth and Holderness. A call for evidence would be launched from 3-31 October to look for stakeholder input. More stakeholder engagement planned. Area in scope is inshore/offshore English waters and offshore N. Ireland.

Questions/points raised included concerns over the types of evidence which may be provided, the role of the existing MPA network both inshore/offshore and their

management, the initial aspiration for pilot sites, the need for the inclusion of socio-economic/cultural data.

Policy update (MF)

(i) IFCA evaluation review report still with Defra and external expert, will be published 'later this year', no date given.

(ii) Sea Fishing Enforcement Regulation SI laid on 30 September, comes into force 28 days later.

SIFCA Order signed 4 Sept, in force 27 Sept, NWIFCA Order signed 4 Sept, in force 28 Sept.

(iii) Fisheries Bill - will be reintroduced ASAP.

Questions/issues raised inc. RC raising point about external IFCA review and whether the report assessed resourcing issues and requested that IFCAs could see the draft before publication. RM clarified that there may be a need for an impact assessment as that this was an independent review of IFCAs after 10 years, not a Defra report, but said that she would take request back to review team. WW linked this to wider issue around deliver of Landing Obligation and new tech con regulation 20141 and the inherent deregulation of fishing and lack of enforcement options available as a result and asked about national strategy, rationale and policy objectives for fisheries management moving forwards? RM stated that there have been some D1R /Brexit events on the coast and that there would be a series of webinars planned to inform the fishing industry but would take away wider question.

Action 3: RC to re-send this question to Defra via RM

EU- Exit

Fast-moving landscape, expecting Fisheries Bill in Queens Speech if this happens, meanwhile UK working with all member states and third parties in advance of 31 October. Business readiness workshops held around country, leaflets being produced for industry, detailed guidance on use of/need for Environmental Health Certificates (EHC) on .GOV website. Reference made to new Certification Support officers to assist with EHCs –SD asked how this workforce was being populated, RM offered to report back. Concerns raised by JL about need for strong Defra steer regarding enforcement priorities in event of no-deal to provide clarity to IFCAs. RM undertook to takes this away and would talk to MMO ref MMO/IFCA interface and ask MMO to talk to us directly.

TT recorded the thanks of forum members to Martina de Fonzo for all her work with us.

3. Finance & Resources

- a. Profit and Loss – first quarter
- b. Budget variation
- c. End of year accounts
- d. Future funding considerations

SB is running two accounting systems whilst migrating to new system which will aid reporting.

PW raised point that stating revenue of £120K for Q1 may not be correct as subscriptions were for entire year, so £30K attributed to Q1, need to reflect annual income vs quarterly expenditure. RC asked what the total loses would be for entire year and what impact this will have on reserves. SB – not as much as last year. PW offered to assist SB with accounts, which was accepted.

Action 4: PW to assist SB with presentation of accounts.

PW – raised awareness of the 2018/10 overspend including insurance for the capital equipment, T&S, increased venue costs and one off payments. PW agreed to assist CEO with setting out budget options for 2020/21.

PW's analysis that there was a loss of £37K in 2018/19, reducing reserves from £110K in March 2018 to £72K in March 2019, so two years of running a deficit would wipe out remaining reserves. Shortfall partly from reduction in income from £120K to £109K, also this number is not clear in the accounts as the final accounts include grant payments for the MPA project and other sums that are cost neutral to the Association.

Conclusion that accounts must be signed off at Directors' meeting to follow forum and PW was thanked by TT for his assistance.

[Discussion on item 3 paused and Item 4b on national training provision moved up as Ian Jones (IJ) present]

4. Matters for decision

4b National training provision (WW and IJ)

WW provided introduction to agenda item with paper 1 setting out this year's work and recommendations, followed by paper 2 setting up medium term strategy and novel three tiered paying structure to meet different needs of IFCA's and highlighted need for decision today as national training officer (NTO) post runs Jan – Jan. **[see papers from agenda item for detail].**

Points raised in discussion – clarification of amendments made to paper 2:

S 5.5: £5622 income from external sources

s 5.6 Shortfall from AIFCA reserves - it was agreed that this was no longer possible.

s. 5.7 If shortfall happens, officer time could be reduced to 4 days/wk to mitigate this.

IJ gave detailed presentation about progress and achievements over last 8 months, including the approach taken, types of training provided, and 124 officers trained so far, with more to be covered with forthcoming advanced officer course, with target of 90 trainees for 2020.

Issues that arose in discussion included very positive feedback from NWIFCA officers via SA, who raised a question about future demand for courses – IJ reported that there were many short courses in development and WW clarified that there is 12-18% national annual turnover in IFCOs. In response to question from JL, IJ confirmed the process for external validation via OFQAL and the importance of the individual training records and importance of training for recruitment/retention of properly qualified, professional officers.

JG made points that the scope for new courses, the need to maintain momentum and investment including overpaying for services by EIFCA and the need for succession planning to support IJ's great work.

A detailed discussion regarding budgetary issues followed, including the potential next year to pay additional IFCOs to contribute to training delivery, the need to phase in admin costs which are currently being underwritten by KEIFCA, the importance of obtaining further external income but also members recognised the need to have a mechanism to balance any shortfall in overall budget which would fall to KEIFCA as host but could be mitigated by being shared by all 10 IFCA's.

Many members spoke in support of the principle of continuation of the NTO post, with an amendment to the report by RC to remove s5.5 and return this report with an alternative

solution to cover this eventuality. SA also expressed a desire to renegotiate funding package.

All three recommendations from agenda item were taken together. These were proposed by RC, seconded by LW, all voted in favour. Thanks were given to Ian Jones and Will Wright for all their work.

[Discussion then returned to item 3, ref. P.14]

Finances must be submitted to Directors' meeting for sign-off.

SB reported that he would be unable to set a balanced budget for 2010/21 due to upward pressures identified on p.14, in addition to shortfall arising from DSIFCA. Reserves have been depleted and alternative sources of income to cover revenue costs rather than capital projects have not been found and decisions have not yet been made about SR19 in which the AIFCA plans to ask Defra for a doubling of funding. Both MH and WW made suggestion that there would be to be a funding options paper put to the December forum meeting which should include the possibility of DSIFCA rejoining, as well as the impact of setting a budget without its contribution.

In response to questions about management of long term staff absence, SB reported that been additional assistance had been brought in from accountants and website designer but he had not practically managed to recruit temporary cover for admin work, which would be expensive.

MH/LW suggested that Emma at NIFCA could assist with advert for temporary staff.

Action 4: SB to speak to Emma at NIFCA.

4. Matters for decision (cont.)

a. Report on the review of the Association – TT

TT gave a verbal update (to be circulated with minutes after request from members) on the progress of the review to date against the list of recommendations in the 3KQ report including update of CEO role which is being evaluated, a similar process is still required with admin role. Work is underway on metrics, on updating the website, production of minutes, annual planning and member liaison.

Concern from DMC about communication about review work not being as full as possible, SD took responsibility for not being able to circulate info earlier, had hoped to be further ahead at this stage. **Action 5: JG to recirculate update paper on review.**

b. Discussion on No Deal planning – RC (including paper circulated to members)

RC explained purpose of paper was to set out need for IFCA's to nationally coordinate our responses to Defra's requests for help as it was necessary to understand Defra's priorities/risks, otherwise IFCA's risk not being able to support Defra. Paper has two recommendations: (i) that AIFCA seeks to coordinate responses and (ii) AIFCA writes to Defra to communicate this and to understand risks/priorities. RC thanked WW for his work in coordinating D1R workstream.

WW gave an update on JMOC's coordinating role and where he has provided operational oversight from IFCA perspective and the need for clearer IFCA representation at JMOC to feed in more detailed, quality information. He highlighted the operational challenges of planning where it is difficult to predict how issues could evolve and spread but need to de-escalate wherever possible, LW raised issue around cross border communication with Marine Scotland.

RC - highlighted importance of being able to prioritise the competing requests made of us within the context of a national emergency so that our delivery matches expectations, and raised concern that IFCA capabilities and readiness were not being correctly represented to Defra. All mindful of impacts on staff of these competing requests and the need for CO's to have political cover in light of any decisions taken.

Action 6: SB/RC to write to Defra on basis of RC's paper

5. Matters for noting

a. MPA project update (report) – Page 31

b. MPA project Steering Group minutes – Page 33

Report/minutes noted.

c. National recreational strategy verbal update – LW/TD

LW reported that he would be attending Defra angling workshop on 7 Oct and TD referred to his attendance at Angling Trust meeting to help to discuss where IFCA could help with the delivery of marine elements of their strategy.

d. iVMS verbal update – Julian Gregory

Project still under review, in relation to query over use of mobile vs fixed devices. There is national debate about ping rates. Issues over Succorfish and data transmission and role of the Devon & Severn pathfinder project have been raised by JG and need a project solution ASAP.

e. CEO Meeting Log – Page 37 Noted.

f. Directors minutes - Page 40 Noted and agreed.

g. Devon and Severn update – TT

TT and SD gave positive feedback about recent meeting between CIFCA, DSIFCA CO, Chair.

6. AOB

TT thanked NIFCA for invitation to launch event for new vessel, Robert Arkless MBE. Forthcoming Inshore Fisheries Management conference is over-subscribed, RC giving presentation on SIFCA work.

TD gave update on his involvement with MCA static gear marking group which includes RYA, NFFO, MCA, Cruising Association (CA), IFCA's and the need to reposition issue as one which needs MCA guidance, not IFCA management.

Close of meeting 16:00

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 3 December 2019 – Watermen's Hall, 16-18 St Mary at Hill, London EC3R 8EF.

Actions from this meeting

	Action	By Whom
Action 1	AIFCA to write again to Defra regarding impact of new EU technical conservation regulation on the management of recreational fishing.	RC/SB
Action 2	RC to write to Natalie Bown with list of tasks/requests from Defra.	RC
Action 3	RC to re-send this question about wider fisheries management priorities to Defra via Rachel Muckle	RC
Action 4	SB to speak to Emma at NIFCA about potential advert text for temporary recruitment of admin staff	SB
Action 5	JG to recirculate update paper on AIFCA review.	JG

Action 6	SB/RC to write to Defra on basis of RC's paper	SB
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