

Members should note that these minutes are unconfirmed until the next Quarterly meeting and should be treated as confidential. The draft minutes should not be sent or discussed outside IFCA membership.

48 AT A MEETING OF THE NORTH WESTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY held at Morecambe Town Hall on 11th March 2016

PRESENT – MEMBERS

Councillor A. J. Markley	(Chairman)	Cumbria County Council
Ms H. Ake		Natural England (Officer)
Dr J. Andrews		MMO appointee (Marine Environment)
Dr E. Baxter		MMO appointee (Marine Environment)
Mr C. Booth		MMO appointee (Marine Science/Environment)
Councillor K. Brown		Lancashire County Council
Mr D. Clarke		MMO appointee (Fishing Industry – Cumbria)
Mr B. Crawford		MMO appointee (Anglers and Recreation)
Councillor J. Elmes		Blackpool Council
Mr R. Graham		MMO appointee (Commercial)
Mr T. Jones		MMO appointee (Commercial/Aquaculture)
Mr B. Leigh		MMO appointee (Anglers and Recreation)
Mr S. Manning		MMO appointee (Commercial)
Mr M. Oddy		MMO appointee (Marine Environment)
Miss C. Salthouse		MMO appointee (Marine Environment)
Mr K. Thompson		MMO appointee (Commercial/Aquaculture)
Mr D. Ward		MMO (Officer)

NWIFCA OFFICERS ATTENDING

CEO, Head of Enforcement, Finance Officer, Clerk, Master Patrol Vessel

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mr D. Harpley	MMO appointee (Marine Environment)
Councillor J. J. Kelly	Sefton Council
Councillor K. Little	Cumbria County Council
Mr C. Lumb	Natural England (Officer)
Councillor B. Mooney	Wirral Council
Ms P. Taylor	MMO appointee (Marine Environment)
Councillor P. Williams	Cheshire West and Chester Council
Councillor B. Woolfall	Halton Council
Mr D. McAleavy (Officer)	Sefton Council
Mr P. Wright (Officer)	Halton Council
Mr C. Clayton (Officer)	Wirral Council

49 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. The Chairman welcomed MMO officer Mr D. Abbott and visitors.
2. Summary notes of byelaw consultation meetings held in February/March 2016 are tabled (Agenda Item 8).
3. The Chairman announced a presentation and lunch to mark the retirement of long-serving IFCO S. Brown who has completed 29 years' service with the North Western IFCA and the previous Sea Fisheries Committee

50 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

Agenda Item 8. Byelaw Review. Mr T. Jones, Mr S. J. Manning.

Agenda Item 10. Report on TSB meeting held on 2nd February 2016. Mr T. Jones, Mr S. Manning

Agenda Item 11. Science Report. Mr T. Jones, Mr S. Manning

Agenda Item 12. Leven Sands Cockle Fishery. Mr T. Jones, Mr S. Manning

51 TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF NWIFCA MEETING HELD ON 11TH DECEMBER 2015 (Agenda Item 3)

RESOLVED

1. To amend Minute 36(1) to include Dr J. Andrews and Mr M. Oddy in the list of new members welcomed.
2. To approve and sign the minutes as a correct record.

52 MATTERS ARISING (Agenda Item 4)

1. Members asked for minutes to be circulated within two weeks. Officers explained the constraints of other work and limited staff but agreed to aim to circulate draft minutes by email within one month.
2. An error in the numbering of the minutes was rectified.
3. Minute No. 44. Vessel Procurement.

Mr Graham asked for the point he had made at the 11th December meeting regarding accountability and progress with the procurement to be recorded.

53 FINANCIAL REPORT (Agenda Item 5)

Approval of the recommendations were proposed by Mr Crawford and seconded by Councillor Brown.

RESOLVED

1. The budget review to 31st January 2016 be approved.
2. The effectiveness of independent audit is reviewed and approved and that Moore & Smalley, LLP are appointed as independent auditors.

54 HEAD OF ENFORCEMENT REPORT (Agenda Item 6)

Lytham seed mussel fishery was authorised on 9th November but stopped (16th November–7th December) by Fylde Council following a poor hygiene test result. A size mussel fishery has also been active at Lytham.

Bass: Information on plans to inform recreational sea anglers of changes to the legislation was requested. Notices have been posted throughout the District and on the website. Mr Crawford asked for a copy of the poster. A press release was suggested.

Cefas are carrying out a sea bass tagging study in the North West. Proposals will be presented to the next TSB meeting.

Landing Obligations. Discard plans for the Irish Sea are under consideration by the CFP Regional Advisory Council North Western Waters Committee. NWIFCA has received the list of vessels subject to discard limits. Vessels affected in our District will be assessed and the Authority may wish to make representation on any regional plans.

Enforcement Summary. Enforcement data by “Solway Protector” is not included in the Enforcement Summary. Inclusion was requested in future.

MCZ Designations. Co-location of an MCZ with the Walney wind farm was queried. Science officers stated that co-location of this site was always expected and agreed with operators. Ms Knott said officers planned to monitor changes in fishing on the site. A decline in *Nephrops* trawling and an increase in potting could lead to more sustainable fisheries, aid recovery of some habitats and support that fishing sector.

It was **RESOLVED** to receive the report.

55 CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT (Agenda Item 7)

Defra: ‘New burdens’ funding of IFCA’s will continue at the same level for the next four years. This was good and unexpected news in the current financial climate. A cross government review of marine functions is planned.

MMO recruitment: The latest round of recruitment to appoint two new members was unsuccessful. Science and industry are underrepresented particularly from the south part of the district. MMO will work with NWIFCA to raise awareness before further recruitment.

Annual Plan: CEO reported that the draft plan for 2016 has been submitted to Defra to meet the deadline in the Marine Act. In previous years the plan has not been a priority for members but as in previous years members are invited to comment on the plan. Also as in previous years comments from other agency members (MMO, EA and NE) are invited and the plan will be continue as a working document.

IFCA monitoring framework. Dr Andrews queried the AIFCA minutes reference to NWIFCA concern about the new framework. CEO agreed he did have concerns but the new guidance unlike the previous system is non-statutory. The Authority is advised to have regard to the criteria but is not required to use them in full. The Annual plan for 2016-17 shows how the NWIFCA expects to address the new criteria which are included in the plan. Dr Andrews suggested members be invited to send comments by 31st March for further discussion at the June meeting.

RESOLVED

1. Comments on the Annual Plan to be received by 31st March 2016.
2. The Annual Plan be referred to the June meeting for further discussion.

56 PRESENTATION TO IFCA S. BROWN

The Chief Executive outlined Mr Brown’s earlier career as a fisherman and his 29 years’ service with the North Western and North Wales SFC and subsequently North Western IFCA. His technical knowledge of fishing in the eastern Irish Sea is unparalleled. Mr Brown has recently researched the archives and compiled a report with pictures on the historical patrol vessels operated by the SFC. Copies are available from the Clerk.

Mr Brown has also for many years led young air cadets who have benefited from the character building training he has provided. Dr Atkins wished Mr Brown a long and happy retirement.

IFCA Phil Capper recounted anecdotes of interest during his time working with Mr Brown. He presented Mr Brown with a gift on behalf of the officers and wished him a long and happy retirement.

The Chairman then thanked Mr Brown on behalf of the Authority for his work over the past 29 years.

57 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING until 1315 hours was agreed

58 MEETING RECONVENED AT 1325 HOURS

59 BYELAW REVIEW (Agenda Item 8)

1. Byelaw 3: Permit to fish for cockles and mussels 2016

Members discussed revisions to Byelaw 3 including the proposed trading permit and permit fee. Informal consultation meetings have been held with industry. Use of net bags was queried. Members were asked to send comments on the proposed byelaw for consideration at the next TSB meeting.

2. Emergency Byelaw: Restrictions on fishing for bivalve molluscan shellfish 2016.

The emergency byelaw will need to be replaced by a full byelaw within 12 months. Officers are drafting a new byelaw based on the provisions of NWNWSFC Byelaw 12. Members reviewed the reason for the introduction of the emergency byelaw and discussed the term "reasonably foreseen".

A draft dredge byelaw will be submitted for discussion at TSB.

Dr Andrews queried priorities for the byelaw review. CEO stated that priorities were based on a NWIFCA review in 2011 but had been and were continually subject to change. Dr Andrews asked for a copy of that report. Byelaws currently made or in progress include Byelaw 2 (Vessel Size), Byelaw 8 (Foul Hooking) and Byelaw 10 (Protection of Lobsters).

RESOLVED

1. Approve draft of new Byelaw 3 for further discussion by TSB.
2. Approve next priority to be to convert the emergency dredge byelaw into a District-wide byelaw to prohibit dredging without a permit. Vote was 9 for and 2 against.

60 VESSEL PROCUREMENT UPDATE (Agenda Item 9)

A meeting of the new Vessel Committee was held on 21st January 2016. Representatives from Lancashire County Council and Seafish attended. The Chairman reported the discussion.

Members asked about vessel specification, procurement process, schedule, next steps and actions. Detail has still to be developed. Members agreed to seek to purchase and modify a suitable used vessel. Mr Graham voiced concerns about the slow progress of the procurement process.

The Chairman mentioned possible use of EMFF (EU Marine and Fisheries Fund) which has funds allocated to vessel purchase. Mr Abbott (MMO) said planning was needed between IFCAS to make sure spending was agreed across all authorities.

Next meeting 25th February 2016. (N.B. This meeting was postponed because members were unavailable and rearranged for 25th April 2016.)

It was **RESOLVED** to Receive the Report.

61 REPORT ON TSB MEETING HELD ON 2ND FEBRUARY 2016 (Agenda Item 10)

The TSB Chairman, Mr Graham, reported.

BMWG. The group is progressing the Morecambe Bay Mussel Management Plan. A draft Management Plan for cockle stocks in Morecambe Bay is proposed.

Cockle and Mussel Byelaw Review. Mr Graham voiced concerns on the proposals to remove the requirement for boat safety endorsement. This requirement was included in the original byelaw following the cockle tragedy in Morecambe Bay in order to better regulate the fishery. He felt some kind of safety standards should be built in to the byelaw.

Members approved further development of the byelaw taking account of comments from stakeholders and MMO.

Bass Update. Members were updated on the new bass regulations. Mr Crawford pointed out an error in the date of 31st July shown in the last line which should be 30th June.

Science Report. MCZ Tranche 2 Designations. The 2 new designations in the District are West of Walney and Allonby Bay. Mud Hole may be in Tranche 3 in 2017.

Moorside Power Station. The main concern is the proposal for a jetty to offload construction materials which could interfere with fishing activities.

It was **RESOLVED** to receive the report.

62 SCIENCE REPORT (Agenda Item 11)

Rossall Sea Defences. Planning and design of the sea defences has been agreed. A platform for recreational sea anglers is included in the plans.

Assessment of Fishing Activities in European Marine Sites. Dr Andrews asked for clarification on the meaning of Non-occurring "Light" TLSE. The Senior Scientist reported that in order to provide a full audit of all fishing activities against all features, all non-occurring activities had been grouped by site and a document written for each.

The fisheries posing the greatest potential risk to conservation features are cockle and mussel fisheries and shrimp beam trawling. Individual assessments are being carried out for cockle and mussel fisheries and mitigation / management may be necessary. Levels of shrimp beam trawling are very low within the district and the types of gear being used (light gear) are not felt to be particularly damaging.

Moorside Power Station. Extraction and discharge of cooling water was raised. Ms Knott said she has no details but will raise the question with Moorside.

Staffing and Recruitment. Ms Knott reported on staff changes. Ms Temple has now left the service of the Authority. A new science officer commences employment on 14th March.

It was **RESOLVED** to receive the report.

63 LEVEN SANDS COCKLE FISHERY (Agenda Item 12)

Opening a limited cockle fishery at Leven Sands under derogation from Byelaw 13A was proposed. A multi-agency group (16 March) will discuss and approve management measures which may include the use of a craam and prohibition of rakes and riddles. Fishing will be monitored. Any breach of the conditions could result in prosecution or removal of the derogation closing the fishery. Disturbance to birds and damage to features including saltmarsh has been considered.

RESOLVED (unanimously) to open a limited, tightly regulated cockle fishery at Leven Sands, Morecambe Bay from 4th April 2016.

64 ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda Item 13)

Science Report. Mr Jones reported a planned PhD project on Morecambe Bay bird populations. The Senior Scientist said this is potentially important research to which the Science Team will contribute

RESOLVED. The science team should contribute work to this project.

There being no further business the Chairman thanked members for attending and declared the meeting closed at 1520 hours.

DRAFT