

**DEVON & SEVERN
INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**

**Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee
held on 16 March 2017 at Brixham Laboratory, Brixham**

Present: Elaine Hayes (Chair)
Cllr Jim Knight (Devon)
Cllr Stuart Hughes (Devon)
Mike Williams
John Butterwith
David Rowe
Simon Pollentine
Andrew Knights (NE)

Also Present: Tim Robbins (Chief Officer)
Angela Stirland (Finance DCC)
Hazel Mitchell (D&S IFCA)

Apologies: Cllr Terry Napper

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were noted

2. Minutes of last meeting held on 9 December 2016

Page 2, item 6, paragraph 1 – To confirm that the Chair in this instance was Elaine Hayes who had to date received no response to a letter she had written to John Lamb, Chair of the AIFCA.

That the minutes be approved and agreed true and accurate.

Resolved

3. Business Arising

- a. The review of Financial Regulations and Standing Orders will be discussed at agenda item 9.
- b. An explanation of the overspend of landlord/rent charges is explained in the Budget Monitoring Report at agenda item 5.
- c. A letter to the Director of the AIFCA was not actioned due to the agenda item and presentation/attendance by Dr Stephen Bolt, AIFCA at the main Authority meeting.
- d. Data Protection training for General Member is planned to happen prior to the June 2017 meeting.

4. **Matters brought forward by the Chair**

There were no matters brought forward by the Chair.

5. **Budget Monitoring Report**

The Budget monitoring at month 7 indicates that the budget will show a projected underspend at year end of £31,800. This is predominantly due to savings in employee wages due to vacant posts.

The explanation on the overspend on landlord/rent fees was due to the cost of service charges for the old office in Fore Street paid in advance prior to the contract settlement negotiations and the Waddeton rent not budgeted in the landlord/rent figure.

The slight overspend in other areas of the budget will be covered by the current underspend.

The current projected General Reserve Fund balance as at 31 March 2017 is £567,941.

6. **Patrol Vessel Update**

The European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) allocated €500,000 to the 10 IFCAs for the purchase of patrol vessels. Some IFCAs withdrew from the process allowing a greater percentage to the remaining. The D&SIFCA has been allocated €68,300 (£56,900) towards the cost of a replacement vessel. The initial request to the Authority was for an 11m Cabin Rigid Inflatable Boat at the cost of £300,000. Along with the £167,240 from the sale of Drumbeat this still left a deficit of £75,860, which if agreed could be funded from the General Reserve Account.

EMFF was kept deliberately low by the EU to encourage the exploration of alternative methods and new technology for enforcing coastal waters rather than relying on large patrol vessels.

The initial response from the MMO to the potential usage of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) (Drones) to carry out surveillance in a much more cost effective way was encouraged. The EMFF Control Fund budget would allow for a trial of UAV to assess their suitability to deliver future work required by the IFCAs. Due to the specialist nature of the devices the Chief Officer suggested contracting a commercial company to undertake the surveillance work if the trials proved successful.

With the additional implementation of iVMS, success rate of prosecutions using the current 6.5m RIB and with the requirement to explore different and cost effective methods of enforcing the coastal waters the decision to change from purchasing a new 11m RIB using EMFF money to a smaller rib was discussed.

The option to seek a charitable partnership to help financially from the outset was suggested for either the UAV or the patrol vessel

The following recommendation were proposed:

1. That the EMFF money allotted to the D&SIFCA is used to purchase a replacement, potentially a 7m RIB, for the current 6.5m RIB. The cost is likely to be circa £70,000 depending on the exact specification required. A paper to be prepared with quotes and specifications for the RIB will be put to the full Authority at the June 2017 meeting for final decision.
2. That the Chief Officer seeks partners to work on a bid for EMFF project costs to undertake a trial to evaluate the use of UAV for monitoring and control purposes within IFCA districts.

Proposed: Cllr Jim Knight

Seconded: Cllr Stuart Hughes

All in favour, none against.

7. Association of IFCAs

The Chief Officer expressed his concern that when Article 50 is triggered for the UK to leave Europe there will be an uncertainty over the future of fisheries management in for the UK Economic Zone. Given an uncertain future, working with a single national voice through the Association of IFCAs (AIFCA) as a presence during negotiations and for a strong representation of the work of the IFCAs he considers is crucial. Weakened membership of the AIFCA with membership problems and concerns over the funding model at present could prove detrimental to the future of the IFCAs.

Concerns over the operation of the AIFCA still exist. The following requirements should still be considered: Delivery of all the objectives of the AIFCA with clear output and outcome measured against these so the D&SIFCA can quantify what the AIFCA has completed annually. The Annual Plan to be appropriately costed and services are procured in line with policy. To monitor whether this is being addressed the payment of the annual fee to be paid in 2 instalments was still considered important.

The following proposal from the Committee for recommendation by the main Authority will be given after the presentation by Dr Stephen Bolt.

The D&SIFCA remains a full member of the AIFCA for the forthcoming year but payment of the annual fee will be split. During the year a timetable is agreed, targets set and to address the very real concerns of the D&SIFCA. By November a review will be conducted by the D&SIFCA into progress and determine future membership options.

8. Single Tender Action Request

The initial project to fit iVMS units to all mobile gear fishing vessels was suspended which resulted in the associated EMF funding being lost. A new EMFF grant application bid has been submitted for £188,830.00 to reinstate the process with type approved units.

The application for EMFF money to purchase and install iVMS units is managed by the MMO with a requirement as part of the bid to appoint an approved marine electronics company to fit the units to all vessels fishing within the district. An approved company TecMarine has been chosen as the preferred fitter for the South West.

In order for the grant to be paid to the D&SIFCA for Common Seas to be again used to project manage the installations and for TecMarine to be the approved fitters a Single Tender Action is required.

A recommendation was proposed that:

The D&SIFCA appoints TecMarine to be the preferred installer for the iVMS units and that Common Seas CIC be appointed to be the project manager as part of the implementation scheme through a Single Tender Action.

Proposed: David Rowe Seconded: Cllr Jim Knight

All in favour, none against.

9. **Financial Regulations and Standing Orders Review**

All amendments, and updates have been incorporated in the Financial Regulations and Standing Order blue book as per agreement at the quarterly meeting in December 2016.

A caveat to Standing Orders, item 8, paragraph (i) to be inserted to read:

“At the Chairs discretion, members of the public may be invited to address the Authority provided 48 hours’ notice is given”.

Resulting from requests from members of the public to view copies of the draft main Authority meeting minutes before they have been approved by the full Authority and then placed on the website highlighted a possible need to change current policy within the Standing Orders.

Aware that no other IFCA's or committees within DCC publish draft minutes until finally approved by the main Authority as being a true and accurate record to avoid any information being misinterpreted the following recommendation was proposed:

The D&SIFCA continues with its current policy on the publication of minutes of the Authority Minutes and subject to the caveat with regard to the public addressing the Authority the Financial Regulations and Standing Order blue book be agreed.

Proposed: Cllr Stuart Hughes Seconded: Mike Williams

All in favour, none against

10. **Staffing Issues**

- a. Interviews for the new Enforcement Officer took place on 23 February 2017 and the successful candidate was Kelly Hobson who will start on 3 April 2017.
- b. As agreed at the September 2016 meeting to obtain a new fleet vehicle. Officers have been evaluating different vehicles to assess the best option for the IFCA by either leasing or purchase. With help of DCC finance a funding model was produced and having enrolled in the Local Authority Car Purchase scheme enabling a 22% discount purchasing proved to be the better option. Appropriate

vehicles were narrowed down and 2 trialled and the best option was a Skoda Octavia Estate SE Technology.

A recommendation to purchase a Skoda Octavia Estate Se Technology was put to the Committee

Proposed: Cllr Jim Knight Seconded: Mike Williams

All in favour, none against

11. **Health & Safety**

There were no issues or near misses to report.

The Chief Officer wished to inform the Committee that as of 1 Jan 2017 any STCW95 qualification already held is valid for a mandatory period of 5 years. All IFCA officers will be due to renew Sea Survival, First Aid, Fire Fighting and Prevention over the next 2 financial years. The budget will be monitored for this additional training requirement.

12. **Any Other Business**

DCC finance despite several attempts by email and phone reported that Bristol City Council had still not paid their 16/17 levy. For action a 7 day letter will be sent to Bristol City Council making them aware of the failure to pay with a copy to be sent to the CEO at Bristol City Council and DEFRA.

12. **Date of next meeting**

Thursday 15 June 2017 at Exeter Racecourse, Exeter