

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

**Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee
held on 17 March 2016 at Brixham Laboratory, Brixham**

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

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

Apologies: Cllr Peter Bryant (North Somerset), Karlien Bond (DCC)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were noted

2. Minutes of meeting held on 11 December 2015

That the minutes be approved

Resolved

3. Business Arising

- a. Jason Lowther, author of potential liability for consequences to funding Authorities has been contacted by the Chief Officer and will hopefully present/talk at the September 2016 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 10 indicates that the budget will show a projected underspend at year end of £11,100. This is predominantly due to savings in employee wages due to vacant posts. 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 2016 is £536,585.

Points raised:

- a. Due to the noncompliance of Ivms units delaying installation the funds earmarked for the Ivms project will remain in the General Reserve account. A new submission bid for EMFF grant funding will be made whilst awaiting for type approval of the Ivms units.
- b. Concerns over the delay of appointing an apprentice were made. With the 2 new enforcement officers in post and trained up the appointment will be readdressed. The Chief Officer accepted the advice/guidance offered by Cllr Jim Knight and a meeting will be arranged.
- c. Confirmation that the end of the lease agreement for the old offices in Fore Street would be terminating on 31 March 2016 was provided.
- d. Commented that HR costs appeared to be very high. A suggestion to look at external HR companies to quote for their services was made.

6. Patrol Vessel Update

Current situation – The Chief Officer has been advised that our use of Proteus is likely to be withdrawn by the EA though no official confirmation has been received. The current charter a covered rib at a cost of £6,000 per month, currently funded by this year's underspend, is due to terminate on 31 March 2016 as not affordable to continue. The occasional use of a local angling charter boat at Salcombe is only a short term option as the owner does not want to potentially jeopardise relations within the fishing community.

January 2016 European Maritime & Fisheries Fund (EMFF) became available to bid for. The fund offers 90% of the cost towards fishery protection vessels but a caveat that 60% of the vessel time be used within the Common Fisheries Policy, which is not relevant operationally within our role/remit as an IFCA, makes this option to obtain help towards the cost of a replacement vessel for the IFCA less likely. To purchase a new wheelhouse rib which came out the preferred option from the report previously submitted to the Authority, would be in the region of £350,000 to £500,000. Talks with Southern IFCA to approach a manufacturer with a dual build but to create our own specifications could help reduce costs. The suggestion to approach manufacturers for costs and time lines for fitting out a vessel with a paper put to the June 2016 was made. Prior to this the Chair reiterated that as we do not have sufficient reserves to buy a new rib outright and that the following should be looked at:

- a. All potential funding opportunities for a new vessel to convince all Authority members of the cost restrictions we have in reality.
- b. Whether money from external corporate sponsorship is available or evidence that this is not an option.
- c. An options appraisal paper on issues covering purchase versus long lease versus short lease and to be able to justify the purchase.

7. **Staffing Issues**

- a. **Enforcement Officers** - The 2 new officers, Gavin Mayhew and Laura Bullock have now completed their 6 month probationary period and had settled in well. Both completed the Fishery Officer training in Jan 16 and were now fully warranted.
- b. **Research Assistant** - By redirecting some of the money provided by DEFRA to fund the MPA work it has been possible to extend the appointment of the Research Assistant by 7 months so that the contract will now terminate on 31 March 2017.
- c. Due to further redundancies within the Environment Agency staff in the Northern area of our region was now down to 1 which will result in less time able to be spent on IFCA work. The Chief Officer will monitor the situation.
- d. **Communications Post** - An external company has been approached to help with the set up and they are in the process of doing this.

8. **Health & Safety**

- a. Notified that one of our vehicles towing the rib on a trailer was involved in a road accident and that the 2 officers involved were being monitored for any delayed side effects. The trailer was so badly damaged it needed towing to a compound and the rib was waiting to be inspected by a marine expert to assess any damage.
- b. New dry suits had been ordered for Officers to use whilst out on the Rib.

9. **Any Other Business**

There was no other business raised.

10. **Date of next meeting**

Thursday 16 June 2016 – Exeter Race Course, Exeter

AGENDA ITEM	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE
5b	Meeting Chief Officer/Cllr Knight to receive advise for apprenticeship	Chief Officer
5d	Chief Officer to look at cost of external HR Services	Chief Officer
6	Funding opportunities for the purchase of a patrol vessel with options, costs and time frames.	Chief Officer