

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

**Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee
held on 16 June 2016 at Exeter Race Course, Exeter**

Present: Elaine Hayes (Chair)
Cllr Jonathan Hawkins deputising for Cllr Stuart Hughes
John Butterwith
David Rowe
Mike Williams
Simon Pollentine
Simon Toms (EA)

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

Apologies: Cllr Stuart Hughes, Cllr Jim Knight, Cllr Peter Bryant, Karlien Bond

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were noted

2. Minutes of meeting held on 17 March 2016

That the minutes be approved and agreed true and accurate.

Resolved

3. Matters Arising

- 5b. Chief Officer had a meeting with Cllr Knight to discuss an apprenticeship and a further meeting is scheduled to be held with Devon CC in July.
- 5d. Chief Officer reported still looking at the cost of using external HR Services.
- 6. Funding opportunities for the purchase of a patrol vessel will be discussed at agenda item 9
- 7d. The recruitment of a Communications Officer was still on hold as a revamp on the strategy is required. It was requested this be raised again at the next quarterly meeting. Communications work by a local company Cloudberry Digital to introduce an online payment system to purchase permits is near completion.

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

There were no matters brought forward by the Chair.

5. **Statement of Accounts**

From 2015/16 there is no longer a requirement to produce a Small Bodies Return for those with an annual turnover of no more than £6.5m. Mrs Stirland provided a detailed explanation of how the final state of accounts for 2015/2016 was reached with a request that all members acknowledge the Accounting statement at Appendix A. It was agreed that it would be informative and helpful for the Accounting statement to continue being provided annually.

As at 31 March 2015 there was an overall underspend of £4,677 but as a commitment to the Skate Project of £9,020 was agreed previously by the Authority, a transfer of £4,343 from the General Reserve to cover the difference was required. A request that this project should be referred to as the Ray and not Skate projected was made.

It was to be noted that the DEFRA MPA Project credit of £28,467 was funds restricted to the DEFRA Special Project only and was money awarded which overlapped 2 financial years. This money was already earmarked and being used to fund the employment of the Research Officer Stephanie Davies until March 2017 to do this work.

The total balance of the General Reserve Account as at 31 March 2016 was £734,685 which included £28,467 DEFRA Special Projects and Capital Receipts of £170,777.

6. **Chair Allowance**

The Chair handed over the proceedings to Vice Chair John Butterwith for this agenda item.

In general it was decided that in comparison with other IFCA's the Devon & Severn Chair was underpaid for the size and responsibility held. Despite a proposal to bring the figure in line with Cornwall IFCA a proposed increase to £4,000 per year was proposed for recommendation to the main Authority.

Proposal: David Rowe Seconded: Cllr Jonathan Hawkins

All in favour

The Vice Chairs do not currently receive any remuneration for their services. A proposal to offer £400 per year in recognition of having to take on Charing duties was made for recommendation to the main Authority.

Proposal: Elaine Hayes Seconded: David Rowe

All in favour

7. **General Members' Allowance**

The General Members on the Committee expressed a declaration of interest in this agenda item.

The allowance was set up to be paid to General Members as a token gesture in recognition of a member giving up a day's work to attend the Committee meeting and giving their input to the discussions.

A proposal to continue the payment of £100 to General Members for recommendation by the main Authority was made.

Proposal: Cllr Jonathan Hawkins Seconded: Simon Toms

8. **Appointment of Treasurer**

Mary Davis, County Treasurer for Devon County Council has been Treasurer to the D&S IFCA since the IFCA was created and has indicated that she is happy to stand again at this annual appointment review.

A recommendation to appoint Mary Davis as Treasurer for the next 12 months was made:

Proposed: Mike Williams Seconded: Cllr Jonathan Hawkins

All in Favour

9. **Patrol Vessel Update**

The Chief Officer reported that a paper with various options for a replacement vessel had been produced but as no clarity on the funding could be provided he thought it was inappropriate to ask the Authority to approve any recommendations until the funding was clear. He had attended several meetings recently regarding European Maritime Fisheries Funding (EMFF) but the details were changeable, unclear and exactly how this money could be used.

Concern over how the IFCA planned to cover the gap until a decision and replacement was found was made. The principle that a replacement vessel is needed was confirmed whether there was EMF funding or not to fulfil our statutory obligations. Alternative options for funding were to be investigated and confirmed if available before having to possibly approaching the funding Authorities for a capital contribution. A small working group is to be formed to help gather and compile all the required information and help put together a technical specification and help with the process.

10. **Pension Changes**

The Devon & Severn IFCA reviewed parts of its pension scheme and brought it in line with those undertaken by Devon County Council due to recent changes in regulations.

11. **Anti-Slavery Law**

Even though the IFCA is not listed in the Duty to Notify provision introduced in Nov 15 due to the nature of the work that is carried out it has been recommended that if Officers see anything suspicious whilst out on patrol they should notify the relevant authorities. The officers will be provided with a list of contact numbers in order to do this but with a recommendation from the Border Force that they should not personally tackle anyone directly.

12. **Seconded Staff Report**

The Committee was updated with the news that our use of Salcombe Security Services who covered the Salcombe Estuary were no longer in business and with the manning levels of Environment Agency staff cut we also no longer had cover on the North Coast. This was putting tremendous pressure on our current resources. A budget of £20,000 was already agreed/earmarked this financial year to cover their work. Various options were put forward for discussion and consideration.

It was proposed that the option to employ 2 additional enforcement officers, to be based on the north coast of the district in order to ensure that the IFCA can carry out its statutory duties be recommended to the main Authority.

The envisaged cost of £76,000 for 2 Officers in the paper had not taken into account the £20,000 currently set aside in the budget for 2016/17.

Proposal: John Butterwith Seconded: Mike Williams

All in favour

13. **Rib Accident**

All surveyance, replacement and repairs had been completed on the Rib, trailer and Ford truck in relation to the road accident which occurred in March 2016.

14. **Health & Safety**

There were no incidents to report but it was recommended that any future ‘near misses’ should be recorded.

As a result of the accident in March involving the Ford Truck and Rib front dash cams had been fitted to all the fleet vehicles.

15. **Any Other Business**

There was no any other business raised.

16. **Date of next meeting**

Thursday 15 September 2016 at Bristol Port, Avonmouth

AGENDA ITEM	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE
3	Chief Officer meeting with DCC to receive advise for apprenticeship	Chief Officer
3	Chief Officer to look at cost of external HR Services	Chief Officer
3	Chief Officer to provide update on Communication Officer post	Chief Officer
9	Update on Patrol Vessel and its funding implications	Chief Officer
9	Setting up of small working group to create specification for boat replacement	Chief Officer