

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Pia Bateman – Chief Executive Officer



Unit 3 Holes Bay Park
Sterte Avenue West
Poole Dorset
BH15 2AA
Tel/Fax 01202 721373

3rd December 2025

Dear Member,



MEETING OF THE AUTHORITY

A meeting of the Authority will be held at The RNLI College, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset, BH15 1NZ on **11th December 2025** at **14:00**, to discuss the business on the under mentioned Agenda.

Car parking at the RNLI college is limited on a pay and display basis. Additional parking is available in local pay and display car parks. Poole bus station and Poole railway station are a 5-10 minute walk from the venue.

Members of the public can request to attend the meeting through emailing enquiries@southern-ifca.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Pia Bateman, CEO
enquiries@southern-ifca.gov.uk



13:30

Committee Members Briefing (No.6).

To receive a 20-minute presentation from IFCA Meredith-Davies on aquaculture in Poole Harbour.
*(Member attendance optional – noting that there will be an array of **festive fancies** to accompany a cup of tea or coffee prior to the start of the meeting)*

AGENDA

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

2. Declaration of Interest

All Members are to declare any interests in line with paragraphs (16) and (17) of the Southern IFCA Code of Conduct for Non-Council Members.

3. Minutes

To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 18th September 2025 (Marked A)

- a. **Recommendations 15:** That the Executive Sub-Committee write to the AIFCA on behalf of the Authority requesting information on the use of Southern IFCA's subscriptions as well as clarity on the role & funding of the Communications and Engagement Officer. To receive a verbal update from the Executive Sub Committee.

4. Chairman's Announcements

To receive any updates from the Chairman.

5. Sub-Committees

To receive the Minutes of the following Sub-Committees and to consider the adoption of the recommendations contained therein:

- a) **Executive Committee** held on 16th September 2025 (Marked B).
- b) **Technical Advisory Committee** held on 21st August 2025 (Marked C).
- c) **Extraordinary Technical Advisory Committee** held on 20th October 2025 (Marked D).

6. Progress Reports

To consider the following:

- a. **Chief Executive Officer updates.** To receive a verbal report from the CEO.
- b. **Black Sea Bream Management Package.** To receive a report from DCO Birchenough following an Extraordinary Meeting of the TAC on the 4th December. (Marked E).
- c. **Solent Scallop Fishery.** To receive an update from PDCO Dell following changes to permit conditions in the above-mentioned fishery.
- d. **Budget Control Statement to September 2025.** To consider a report from the CEO/Accountant (Marked F).

ITEMS FOR DECISION

7. Budget Forecast 2026-2027

To consider a Report from the CEO (Marked G).

8. Levy Contributions 2026-2027

To consider a Report from the CEO (Marked H).

EXTERNAL SPEAKER

9. Solent Seascapes Project Update

To receive a presentation from Ms Louise MacCallum, Solent Project Manager at Blue Marine Foundation.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

10. Compliance and Enforcement Report

To receive a report from DCO Dell (Marked I).

11. Behind the Scenes

To receive staff reports across the Research & Policy, Compliance & Enforcement and Business Services Teams (Marked J).

12. AIFCA Annual Subscriptions

To receive an update from the Executive Sub Committee (Marked K).

13. Advertising an update to the delivery of the Fishing For Cockles (Amendment) Byelaw

To receive a report from DCO Birchenough (Marked L).

14. Marine Licensing

To receive a quarterly update from IFCO Churchouse (Marked M).

15. Sector Group Meetings

To receive the minutes from recent meetings of The South Coast Fishermen's Council and the Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group (Marked N-O).

16. Meeting Venues 2026

To receive a paper from the Facilities & Administration Officer (Marked P).

17. Date of Next Meeting

To confirm the date of the next Authority meeting on the 12th March 2026 at the Shire Hall Museum, High Street West, Dorchester, DT1 1UY.

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Full Authority AGM – 18th September 2025

The AGM the Full Authority was held at 2pm on 18th September 2025 at the Portsmouth Guildhall, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO1 2AB.

Present

Cllr. Paul Fuller	Isle of Wight Council (Chairman)
Cllr. Matthew Winnington	Portsmouth City Council
Cllr. Rod Cooper	Hampshire County Council
Dr Antony Jensen	MMO Appointee
Dr Heidi Guille	MMO Appointee
Mr Richard Stride	MMO Appointee
Mr Gary Wordsworth	MMO Appointee
Mr Mark Cornwell	MMO Appointee
Dr Richard Morgan	Natural England
Mr Stuart Kingston-Turner	Environment Agency
Mr Tom Havelock	Marine Management Organisation
Ms Pia Bateman	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Mr Sam Dell	Principal Deputy Chief Officer (PDCO)
Dr Sarah Birchenough	Deputy Chief Officer (DCO)
Mrs Jennifer Carr	Chartered Accountant
Ms June Furlonger	Facilities & Administration Officer

Mr Connor Reid (Natural England) was present in the public gallery.

Election of Authority Chair and Vice Chair for 2025-2026

1. The CEO informed Members that for the role of Chairman, three nominations had been received for Cllr. P Fuller. In accordance with Standing Orders, the CEO asked Dr A Jensen to seek a seconder to support the nomination. Cllr. R Cooper seconded the nomination. All Members were in favour.

The Chairman, Cllr. P Fuller stated that Cllr. R Hughes had put himself forward for the role of Vice Chairman and invited any other nominations from the Membership. No further nominations were proposed, and as such the Chairman invited a seconder. Cllr. M Winnington seconded the nomination, all Members were in favour.

Resolved

2. That Cllr. P Fuller be elected as Chairman of the Authority for the year 2025-2026.
3. That Cllr. R Hughes be elected as Vice Chairman of the Authority for the year 2025-2026.

Appointment of Sub-Committee Membership for 2025-2026 (Executive)

4. The Chairman invited Council Members to sit on the Southern IFCA Executive Sub-Committee for the period December 2025 to December 2026. Cllr. C Goodall sought to be re-appointed to the ESC. Cllr. R Cooper expressed an interest in being appointed to the ESC to represent Hampshire County Council. The appointment of Cllr. C Goodall and Cllr. R Cooper was seconded by Dr A Jensen, all Members were in favour.

Resolved

5. For two or more Council Members to be appointed to the Executive Sub-Committee for the year 2025-2026.

Appointment of Sub-Committee Membership for 2025-2026 (Audit and Governance)

6. The Chairman invited Council Members to sit on the Southern IFCA Audit and Governance Sub-Committee for the period December 2025 to December 2026. Cllr R. Hughes, Cllr M. Winnington and Cllr K. Wheller sought to be re-appointed to the AGSC. Recognising that Cllr. R Cooper had been appointed to the ESC, in Cllr. B Dunning's absence, the Chairman proposed he be elected to the AGSC. The appointment of Cllr. R Hughes, Cllr M. Winnington, Cllr K. Wheller and Cllr B. Dunning was proposed by Cllr. R Cooper and seconded by Dr A Jensen, all Members were in favour.

Resolved

7. For three or more Council Members to be appointed to the Audit and Governance Sub-Committee for the year 2025-2026.

Apologies

8. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Rob Hughes (Dorset Council), Cllr. Barry Dunning (Hampshire County Council), Cllr. John Savage (Southampton City Council), Cllr. Crispin Goodall (BCP Council), Cllr. Kate Wheller (Dorset Council), Dr Simon Cripps (MMO Appointee), Mr Colin Francis (MMO Appointee), Ms Elisabeth Bussey-Jones (MMO Appointee) and Mr James Morgan (MMO Member).

Declarations of Interest

9. There were no pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests declared.

Minutes

10. Members considered the Minutes of the meeting held on the 12th June 2025. The CEO provided an update on Recommendation 78: that this was an administrative matter that has been resolved.

The CEO provided an update on Recommendation 80: that all feedback received from Members on the Southern IFCA BTFG Statement was incorporated into the final position statement which was uploaded to the Southern IFCA website and social media channels. The position statement has subsequently been updated again following ratification of the BTFG Byelaw 2023.

The Chairman proposed that the Minutes be recorded as accurate, seconded by Mr R Stride, all Members were in favour.

Chairman's Announcements

11. The Chairman stated it was fantastic news that the BTFG Byelaw 2023 had been ratified and thanked the Team for their hard work in delivering the new Byelaw.

The Chairman referenced attendance at the most recent meeting of the AIFCA earlier this month and discussed the positive appointment of a Communications and Engagement Officer in order to raise the national profile of IFCA's. The Chairman outlined he has extended an invitation to the new Officer, Ms Emily Bulled, to attend a future Southern IFCA meeting.

The Chairman stated that he continued to be involved in signing off enforcement cases and works closely with PDCO Dell on these matters.

The Chairman outlined that he supported the recent Member Appraisals which took place in August, recognising the breadth of knowledge and enthusiasm brought by all Members in contributing to the value of Southern IFCA's work and enabling the Membership to work together. The Chairman extended his thanks to all Members for their work on the Authority.

The Chairman referenced attending the meetings of the TAC, emphasising that this provided an opportunity for knowledge sharing and understanding the technical work of the Southern IFCA.

The Chairman concluded by stating that he would be attending the next Community Forum meeting with the fishing community, due to take place on the Isle of Wight. He expressed his grateful thanks to all those involved in organising the Community Forum meetings, recognising that benefits gained from talking to stakeholders and welcomed any Members to attend future Community Forums.

Sub-Committees

12. Members received minutes of the Executive Sub-Committee held on 10th June 2025 and the Technical Advisory Sub-Committee held on 8th May 2025.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Chief Executive Officer Updates

13. The CEO referenced the Minister's letter annexed to this item, stating that it was now slightly out of date based on recent changes in Government, but that it was hoped that the position and intentions of the letter reflect the way the Government are going to continue to move forward, in particular recognising the work that IFCAs achieve and the way in which the Government Policy intention is not to restrict fisheries unnecessarily. The CEO outlined that this position is further supported by the Government's recent response to the Environmental Audits Committee Report 'Governing the Marine Environment', which has recently been published and states that, in response to the report, Government Policy is not to introduce whole site bans on BTFG in MPAs, the approach being to only restrict fishing which is assessed as damaging to the specific protected features of each MPA.

The CEO confirmed that Daniel Zeichner had now been replaced by Dame Angela Eagle, MP for Wallasey, as the Minister of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and the post of Secretary of State, as previously held by the Rt Hon Steve Reed, was now held by the Rt Hon Emma Reynolds, MP for Wycombe. Emma Reynolds has come from The Treasury where she previously served as Economic Secretary and Dame Eagle has most recently held the post of Minister for Border Security and Asylum at the Home Office.

The CEO provided an overview of the Fish, Trace, Ship campaign, run by the MMO which launched in early September, which is set to help support the UK seafood supply chain ready for major changes in how the UK export to EU businesses from 10th January 2026. The MMOs campaign aims to make clear the actions that will need to be taken by each sector of the supply chain from fishers to merchants, to processors and exporters, and the MMO are calling for those likely to be affected to sign up for online updates and planned engagement events.

The CEO outlined that the Great British Inshore Fishing Survey was published in Westminster two weeks ago, which raised concerns from inshore fishers across over 50 ports on matters concerning access to fishing opportunities, increased operating costs, MCA inspections and IVMS. This initiative was run by the Lyme Bay CIC, with over 103 responses received. Relevant to IFCAs and the MMO, one of the questions posed what whether inshore fishers felt that national management and enforcement worked well, 84% responding that they did not, and whether local management by IFCAs worked well, 78% saying it didn't. The CEO outlined that this remains a protected document at present but will be shared with Members once publicly available.

The CEO covered staffing matters, introducing June Furlonger as the new Facilities and Administration Officer, who joined Southern IFCA in mid-August. The CEO thanked the TAC Members for making June feel welcome at her first meeting in August. The CEO also stated that, in other positive news, Project Officers William Meredith-Davies and Chelsea Perrins have both been promoted to IFCOs in the Research & Policy Team, stating it was an exciting opportunity to create permanent contracts for these staff members and that we will look forward to seeing how they can help Southern IFCA go from strength to strength. The CEO outlined that the Senior

Officer in the RPT Team, Emily Condie has left Southern IFCA in recent weeks to travel, wishing Emily the best and thanking her for her work at Southern IFCA.

The CEO thanked all Members who attended their annual appraisals in August, outlining that this had been a hugely beneficial exercise and welcoming Members constructive input. The CEO asked Members to look out for correspondence seeking sign off on the appraisals in the forthcoming weeks, prior to submission to the MMO Governance Team.

The CEO concluded by stating that the Member away day opportunity in September had been cancelled due to poor uptake, noting that the training will go ahead for the Officers but that it is a disproportionate use of resource to undertake the additional preparations required for an away day when there are only a small number of Members confirming attendance. The CEO outlined that she would continue to look for opportunities for the Members to engage with Officers in a less formal manner.

Mr R Stride commented on the Great British Inshore Fishing Survey, stating that it was likely that fishers who had issues with fisheries management would be more likely to respond. It was commented that the survey had not been widely publicised and the nature of the questions requiring yes/no responses had not left room for providing context of any additional information to be included with answers. Mr R Stride stated there was other work ongoing at the University of Gloucester looking at the cultural and social value of fisheries which seemed to be framing questions more appropriately for targeted the fishing industry. The Chairman outlined that face to face engagement is often the most beneficial. Mr G Wordsworth commented that the survey had not provided opportunities to support regulators.

Cllr M Winnington commented that it was positive that the new Minister is the MP for Wallasey which is a coastal area.

Budget Control Statement to July 2025

14. The CEO confirmed that the BCS was the first of the current financial year, capturing the period 1st April to 31st July 2025, and that the accompanying paperwork provided a summary of major budget headers as well as more detailed notes to provide an understanding of all positive and negative variance equal to or greater than 1k.

The CEO summarised that the BCS showed a deficit of c.106k, outlining that this was expected, as at this stage of the financial year, income is yet to be received from Defra for specific projects, in the region of 140k. The CEO outlined that in all Major Budget Headers, a positive variance is being seen at this stage of the year, and therefore the deficit reflects the anticipated income yet to be received. The CEO provided a summary of the Major Budget Headers, as outlined in the Executive Summary.

Mr G Wordsworth asked a question about Southern IFCA's insurance, stating that the amount paid appeared expensive. Mr Wordsworth asked if the IFCA reviews its insurance provision. The CEO outlined that a review was carried out two years ago by the Officer Manager, supported by PDCO Dell. PDCO Dell outlined that the review resulted in a change of broker and that all insurance provisions had been amalgamated under a single broker.

Members discussed the AIFCA subscriptions payment of 14k, requesting clarity on what Southern IFCA receives for that money, reflecting on the need for the AIFCA to keep their subscriptions at a steady level. Members asked that this question be posed direct to AIFCA. Members discussed that a letter could come from the Executive Sub-Committee on behalf of the Authority.

Dr H Guille referenced the appointment of the new Communications and Engagement Officer at AIFCA and queried whether this new post would help support communications for individual

IFCAs as well as at the AIFCA level. The CEO commented that it was hoped the new Officer would help alleviate some of pressures along the coast for individual IFCAs as well as allowing for a joined-up approach nationally which would be beneficial. The Chairman reflected on the need to raise the profile of IFCAs nationally and the good work that is achieved.

A recommendation was proposed by the Chairman that the Executive Sub-Committee writes a letter to the AIFCA, on behalf of the Authority, requesting information on the use of Southern IFCA's subscriptions, in addition to clarity on the role & funding of the Communications and Engagement Officer. Members agreed that this recommendation be put to a vote. Cllr P Fuller proposed the recommendation, seconded by Dr A Jensen, all Members were in favour.

Recommendation

15. That the Executive Sub-Committee write to the AIFCA on behalf of the Authority requesting information on the use of Southern IFCA's subscriptions as well as clarity on the role & funding of the Communications and Engagement Officer.

ITEMS FOR DECISION

Final Statement of Accounts for the Financial Year Ended 31st March 2025. Annual Return from PKF Francis Clark

16. Mrs J Carr introduced the item, explaining that Members had previously received these papers in draft form at the June 2025 meeting, where it was resolved that they be sent to PK Francis for an Independent Assurance Review. This Review has now been completed with no changes made to the Statement of Accounts; PK Francis has provided sign off for the accounts and the annual return.

The Members agreed the recommendations by general consent.

Resolved

17. That Members note the outcomes of the external audit for the financial year ended 31st March 2025.

18. That Members formally accept the Annual Return and that the document be signed at the meeting by the Chairman, the CEO and the Accountant on behalf of the Authority.

19. Annual Reporting 2024-2025

a) Draft Southern IFCA Annual Report 2024-2025

The CEO stated that the 2024-2025 Annual Report was very positive and demonstrated the extent of what has been achieved during a 12-month period, recognising that the work continues over these timeframes and is constantly evolving. The CEO outlined that huge strides have been made this year with a focus on community engagement and co-development, with numerous examples presented through the report. The CEO outlined that she was proud of the team, including the Officers, staff and the Members and that Southern IFCA are achieving a great deal.

The CEO outlined that the Annual Report is prepared in response to a legal requirement on IFCAs to report to the Secretary of State. The length of the document is directly correlated with the work that has been achieved and reflects all aspects of Southern IFCAs comprehensive delivery.

The CEO encouraged Members to read the Executive Summary and stated that a copy of the Chairman's Executive Summary has been provided in hard copy at the meeting. The CEO referenced the case studies included in the report as a highlight of the work being carried out.

The CEO stated that the report has branched out this year to present work that is being delivered at the community level, which will be covered in the next agenda item.

The Chairman commented that it was a fantastic report which improves year on year and thanked the CEO for producing it. Mr G Wordsworth supported this and reflected the high quality of the report.

Mr S Kingston-Turner proposed the recommendations, seconded by Dr A Jensen, all Members were in favour.

Resolved

20. That Members consider and provide comment on the draft Annual Report.

21. That Members approve the Annual Report for submission to the Secretary of State.

b) Draft Constituent Council Reports Initiative

The CEO outlined that six Local Authority reports have been produced to enable Southern IFCA to demonstrate clearly the work that is being achieved in the inshore marine environment on behalf of the Southern IFCA's funding authorities. The reports demonstrate 'value for money' specific to each Local Authorities remit.

The CEO stated the intention to communicate these reports with the relevant persons within each of the Local Authority's to help provide context when considering the work of the IFCA and, to be of use for the Elected Members when championing the role of the IFCA in wider remits and when informing annual budgetary discussions.

The CEO ran through the Isle of Wight Council and Portsmouth Council reports, recognising the Local Authority representation in the meeting, detailing that all of the reports are presented in the same way. Visuals were provided via a presentation, and the CEO outlined that each report details background information on fisheries in the Local Authority area, including numbers of vessels, main target species and sightings information; background information on MPAs in the Local Authority area, presenting the relevant MPAs and the reason for designation; the work of the team in management fisheries and conservation as well as research delivery, covering data collection, survey work and monitoring programmes; policy development in each area, capturing work which is often managed through the TAC including outcomes of new legislation, the development of management and how each Local Authority is contributing to wider Government targets; the work of the CET, capturing compliance work, focus areas for compliance and enforcement outcomes in line with the C&E Framework specific to each Local Authority; and finally a focus on engagement achieved in each area, whether this be via meeting attendance, partnership working, industry collaboration or marine licence responses, providing an overview of what Southern IFCA is doing for the community in these areas.

The CEO outlined the intention to produce these reports annually as a good method of capturing work achieved across the District and to emphasise relevance of work in each Local Authority area, with the information being of interest to local communities.

The CEO invited input from Members on this initiative, thanking the Elected Members who were in attendance for their support and welcoming their feedback.

Cllr M Winnington commented that this was an excellent initiative and provided a lot of information in an accessible format. Cllr Winnington commented that the reports show the level of work at the Local Authority level which is important and is going to be very helpful at illustrating Southern IFCA's work, capturing what the Local Councils support financially and thus do not have to directly resource themselves.

Members agreed the Recommendation by general consent.

Resolved

22. That Members consider and provide comment on the draft initiative.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Compliance and Enforcement Report

23. PDCO Dell provided an overview of the work undertaken by the Compliance and Enforcement Team for the reporting period May to July 2025. The data provided in the report is aligned to national IFCA metrics that are reported to the AIFCA and Defra on an annual basis, in addition to the provision of district specific metrics which capture how the CET's work is working to deliver the Southern IFCA Annual Strategy 2025-2026.

The Chairman thanked the CET Officers for their work.

Behind the Scenes

24. A Behind the Scenes report was provided by all staff at Southern IFCA covering the period of June to August 2025.

Dr A Jensen commented that the reports were very informative and illustrated a great range of work being carried out by Officers. The Chairman stated that it was clear the Officers were growing in their roles and thanked PDCO Dell and DCO Birchenough for supporting the Officers.

Marine Licencing

25. DCO Birchenough delivered an update report on marine licencing applications (MLAs) received by Southern IFCA during the last quarter. DCO Birchenough identified that 16 MLAs had been received between June and August 2025, 9 of which required a response, and 7 MLAs identified as not requiring a response. The number of MLAs requiring a response from April 2025 to August 2025 represented a 31% increase on the same period for the previous year. DCO Birchenough outlined that the report provided a summary of MLAs where a response was required for the last quarter.

Sector Group Meetings

26. The Chairman invited Members to receive the minutes from recent meetings of The South Coast Fishermen's Council, the Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group and the Recreational Angling Sector Group.

Mr R Stride commented that the South Coast Fishermen's Council meets 8 times per year rather than quarterly as stated in the report. DCO Birchenough confirmed this would be updated in future reports.

AIFCA Annual Report 2024-2025

27. Members were invited to receive the AIFCA Annual Report for Members interest and to provide an opportunity to report any comments back to the AIFCA via the CEO or Chairman.

Members thanked the CEO for circulating the report.

Date of Next Meeting

28. Members considered the date of the next meeting to be held at 14:00 on Thursday 11th December at RNLI College, West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset, BH15 1HZ.

Resolved

29. The date of the meeting was confirmed.

The meeting concluded at 15:41.

A meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee (ESC) was held at **14:00 on 16th September 2025** via video conferencing.

Present

Cllr. Paul Fuller	Isle of Wight Council (Chairman)
Cllr. Crispen Goodall	BCP Council
Dr Antony Jensen	MMO Appointee
Mr Richard Stride	MMO Appointee

Ms Pia Bateman	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
----------------	-------------------------------

Principal Deputy Chief Officer (PDCO), Mr Sam Dell and Accountant Mrs Jen Carr were also present.

Apologies

52. Apologies were received from Cllr. Rob Hughes (Dorset Council) and Cllr. Barry Dunning (Hampshire County Council).

Declarations of Interest

53. There were no pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests declared.

Minutes

54. The Minutes from the previous meeting of the ESC held on the 10th June 2025 were considered by Members.

The CEO provided an update on Recommendations 39a and 39b, both matters which have been resolved.

Mr R Stride asked that the following be updated in the minutes: to remove Dr Antony Jensen from 'Present' to 'Apologies' and to update a number of typos in the document. Subject to these changes being made, the Minutes were proposed by Mr R Stride, seconded by Dr A Jensen and agreed by all Members present.

Progress Reports

55. Chief Executive Officer Updates.

The CEO updated Members on staffing matters, to include the recruitment of a Facilities and Administration Officer, June Furlonger. The CEO reported on the recent promotions of Chelsea Perrins and Will Meridith-Davies, Research and Policy Project Officers to IFCO posts following a successful internal recruitment drive. The CEO reported that Senior IFCO Emily Condie had recently left Southern IFCA to go travelling.

Cllr. P. Fuller thanked the Senior Managers for their work in recent months, recognising the impact that the departure of the Office Manager will have had. Dr A. Jensen supported the intention to, in time, provide a promotion opportunity for existing members of the Research & Policy team following the departure of Senior IFCO Condie. Dr A Jensen also discussed the advantages of broadening staff key skills via the publishing of academic papers.

56. ESC Membership: December 2025-September 2026.

The CEO invited Elected Members to express their interest in remaining on the ESC for the forthcoming year, prior to elections on the 18th September 2025. Cllr. C. Goodall confirmed his intention to re-stand for the ESC.

Resolved

57. That the update be received.

58. Six Monthly Management Report: Marked Confidential

The CEO provided Members with a 6-monthly update of the Risk Management Report, in accordance with the Executive Summary provided to Members. Due to the sensitive nature of matters discussed, details are not recorded in the minutes.

Resolved

59. That Members note the updates to the Risk Management Register, as provided in Table 1.

60. That Members consider where risk has been identified and consider additional actions where appropriate.

61. Budget Control Statement to July 2025

The CEO described the Budget Control Statement, capturing the period from the 1st April 2025 to 31st July 2025, which showed an overall deficit of c.£106k across the business, which was explained as expected given that the £140k of project money had yet to be received from Defra.

The CEO provided a summary of the four major budget headers in accordance with information presented on the Executive Summary provided with the agenda pack.

Dr A Jensen asked for clarification of costs surrounding the Poole Order Leases. The CEO confirmed that annual payments were split in year, with lease holders paying 50% in January and 50% in July. The CEO confirmed that leading up to 2030, lease bed fees are timetabled for review to align with ongoing Defra work, as well as the issuing of the new tranche under the Order.

Resolved

62. That the report be received.

63. Final Statement of Accounts for year ended 31st March 2025.

The Accountant introduced the final Statement of Accounts, following presentation of the draft accounts at the previous ESC in June 2025.

Mrs J. Carr explained that Francis Clark had now undertaken the annual audit, ensuring an extra layer of scrutiny on financial matters, recognising the importance of this oversight when managing public money.

The recommendations were proposed by Cllr. P. Fuller, seconded by Cllr. C. Goodall and agreed by all Members present.

The CEO thanked Mrs J. Carr for her work on the accounts, recognising the positive comments received by the external auditor.

Resolved

- 64.** That Members note the outcomes of the external audit for the financial year ended 31st March 2025.
- 65.** That Members formally accept the Annual Return, making a recommendation to the Full Authority on 18th September 2025, that the document be signed at the meeting by the Chairman, the CEO and the Accountant on behalf of the Authority.

66. FPV Endeavour and compliance with Workboat Code 3.

The PDCO provided an overview of the MCA Workboat Code 3 and how this code could impact FPV Endeavour, specifically via provision of an update on her current seating arrangements and where the Authority need to make changes prior to December 2026 when the WBC3 comes into force. PDCO Dell discussed the complexity of this matter and the challenges with changing goalposts regarding Workboat Code 3.

Dr A. Jensen asked why the spec included specific folding seats and why the deck needed to be replaced. He also asked if three surveyors had been approached on this matter. PDCO Dell confirmed that two surveyors had been contacted and a third currently being chased. He also confirmed that the 4 seats were in spec to meet the coding requirements, plus consideration of weight considerations specific to Endeavour.

The CEO discussed ongoing work around risk, with regard to officer exposure to vibration, with this work concurrently running alongside specification works that were currently underway. PDCO Dell committed to providing an update to the ESC as this area of work progresses.

Members agreed the recommendations via mutual consent.

Resolved

- 67.** That Members approval the release the Specification Refit of a Patrol Vessel for Southern IFCA.
- 68.** That Members approve the review of formal quotations in accordance with Southern IFCA Financial Regulations.

69. Accident, Incident and Near Miss Report

PDCO Dell reported that there had been no accident, incidents or near misses over the previous reporting period.

Resolved

- 70.** That the accident and incident report is noted by Members of the Executive Committee.

Date of Next Meeting

- 71.** Members considered the date of the next ESC.

Resolved

72. The date of the next virtual meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee was confirmed as the 9th December 2025.

The Meeting closed at 15:05.

DRAFT

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 21st August 2025

Minutes of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), held in the meeting room at the Southern IFCA office in Poole at **14:00 on 21st August 2025**.

Present

Dr Antony Jensen	Chairman, MMO Appointee
Mr Richard Stride	Vice Chairman, MMO Appointee
Dr Simon Cripps	MMO Appointee
Mr Gary Wordsworth	MMO Appointee
Mr Mark Cornwell	MMO Appointee
Mr Colin Francis	MMO Appointee
Mr Stuart Kingston-Turner	Environment Agency
Mr Connor Reid	Natural England
Ms Pia Bateman	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Principal Deputy Chief Officer (PDCO) Sam Dell, Deputy Chief Officer (DCO) Dr Sarah Birchenough, Senior Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer (SIFCO) Ms Emily Condie, IFCO's Ms Hester Churchouse, Mr Kyle Payton and Mr Jay Bedwell, Project Officers Ms Imogen Wright and Ms Chelsea Perrins were also present. Cllr Paul Fuller, Chairman of the Authority also attended.

Mr Simon Pengelly (Association of IFCA) attended in person.

Apologies

55. Apologies for absence were received from Mr Neil Hornby (MMO Appointee), Ms Elisabeth Bussey-Jones (MMO Appointee), Dr Heidi Guille (MMO Appointee), Dr Richard Morgan (Natural England), Mr James Morgan (Marine Management Organisation).

Declarations of interest

56. The following non-pecuniary interests were declared: Mr Connor Reid (Agenda Item 6), Mr G Wordsworth (Agenda Item 5c & 9). Mr M Cornwell declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 6 & 8.

Minutes

57. Members considered the Minutes of the meeting held on the 8th May 2025 (Marked A) and consideration of the following matters outstanding.

- a. Resolved: Recommendation 45:** that the Catch Zone Map for the PHDP fishery be updated for the 2025 fishing season to reflect the boundary of EA dredge fishing management at the entrance to the Rivers Frome and Piddle.

The minutes were approved by mutual consent.

PROGRESS REPORTS

58. Emergent Updates

The CEO outlined to Members that the updates for this meeting were mainly administrative for Members awareness as well as to provide a brief overview on some national consultations which may be relevant to Members.

The CEO informed Members that she, PDCO Dell, Dr A Jensen and Cllr P Fuller would be on

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 21st August 2025

the Isle of Wight on the 24th September 2025 for the fourth Community Forum. The CEO invited any General Members who wished to attend to inform PDCO Dell. The CEO also informed Members that the September Authority Meeting would be the AGM and that she would be in touch with Members prior to the meeting to seek nominations for Chair and Vice Chair of the Authority.

The CEO outlined that General Member Appraisals are due to take place next week, with Members in post during 2025 having received paperwork on this. All Members were invited to attend a Compliance & Enforcement Training Session in the Solent with correspondence on this having been sent to Members by email, the CEO outlined that this is a first come first served session due to capacity on the vessel Callista which is being used for the training.

The CEO provided information on a number of national consultations that are currently underway. Firstly, a call for evidence running until 5th September which is seeking stakeholder views, encompassing the fishing industry to the general public but not regulators, primarily on how the new Fishing and Coastal Growth Fund should be used and also incorporating a question on how fishing communities have been impacted by recent policy announcements including the EU-UK deal, the proposed ban on bottom trawling in offshore MPAs and the roll out of FMPs. The CEO outlined that if Members are keen to participate, a link to the consultation will be shared after the meeting. Secondly, the CEO covered the MMO Stage 3 Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) Consultation on the impacts of fishing in 43 MPAs and on proposed management measures for 42 MPAs. The CEO outlined that the consultation has been extended and is now open until 29th September 2025. The CEO referenced a third public consultation launched by Defra on proposed reforms to environmental compensatory measures for offshore wind developments. The consultation, which closes on 2nd September 2025, aims to gather feedback on a more flexible and pragmatic approach to managing environmental impacts on MPAs. The reforms seek to clarify requirements for compensation when offshore wind projects cause unavoidable harm to MPAs. The CEO outlined that, according to Defra, the changes are designed to accelerate the UK's transition to net zero and support the Government's "Clean Power by 2030" mission, while also contributing to nature recovery goals. Stakeholders involved in environmental conservation are encouraged to respond with feedback to inform both the legislative framework and accompanying guidance. The CEO stated that she would be happy to circulate links to any of these consultations if Members would like.

The CEO stated that her final update would lead into the next agenda item, informing Members that the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear (BTFG) Byelaw 2023 has now been signed by the Secretary of State. The CEO outlined that PDCO Dell and DCO Birchenough will provide additional updates on how this had directed their relevant teams work in recent weeks but stated to Members that it would be nice to hypothesise that there was a link between the proactive nature of the Southern IFCA in releasing the BTFG Position Statement following the Authority meeting in Winchester and the subsequent ratification of the BTFG Byelaw 2023 by Defra, recognising that inshore fisheries management is a key quantifiable consideration to the UK Government's objectives to achieve 30% protections in the marine environment by 2030.

The CEO drew Members attention to Items 7 & 8 on the agenda which either discuss work which is currently ongoing, as is the case of the REM & AI interim report, or proposed work as per the proposal paper which is looking at gear trials in the Solent Scallop Fishery, both areas of work relying on working with industry in novel ways to help facilitate understandings of sustainable fishing practice and inform management in the inshore environment. The CEO outlined that working with industry in this manner reinforces the importance of using the expertise embedded in the community to find collective solutions to maintaining a viable industry whilst achieving conservation priorities, emphasising that this is also relevant to the

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 21st August 2025

updated on Black Seabream Co-Developed Principles discussed in agenda item 6.

Dr S Cripps stated that the UK Government had been outspoken against bottom trawling at the recent UN meeting but that a new position paper on fishing in MPAs had been published by the WWF which was well balanced and looked at how MPA management can consider communities and impacts through a pragmatic approach. Members briefly discussed legal duties in relation to feature-based management within MPAs.

59. BTFG Byelaw 2023: Byelaw Implementation

PDCO Dell stated to Members that the BTFG Byelaw 2023, ratified by the Secretary of State on 7th July 2025, introduced a mix of new and extended prohibition areas for BTFG, as well as maintaining the requirement for gear to be inboard and above the sea whilst a vessel is transiting through a prohibited area.

PDCO informed Members that since the ratification of the Byelaw, Officers have been carrying out port visits, drone flights and sea patrols across the District, boarding and engaging with towed gear operators. PDCO outlined that conversations have been challenging in some instances, and gave credit to the Officers in their approach to engagement during this time. PDCO Dell outlined that IFCO Payton has assisted the industry by getting the new prohibited area coordinates onto fishing vessel plotters electronically, responding to a previous request from industry and a previous Authority Member that assistance be provided in this regard.

PDCO Dell outlined that Officers have continued to access I-VMS to monitor Byelaw areas and have been engaging with static gear fishers operating on these fishing grounds, noting that since the implementation of the Byelaw static gear operators have extended fishing operations into new prohibition areas.

PDCO Dell stated that the enforcement of the BTFG Byelaw 2023 remains a priority for the Compliance & Enforcement Team and Officers will continue to work to ensure compliance with the new regulation.

The Chairman expressed thanks to the Officers involved in the implementation on behalf of the TAC and echoed the benefits of assisting fishers in having new management areas on their plotters.

60. BTFG Byelaw 2023: Southern IFCA BTFG Position Statement

DCO Birchenough outlined to Members that at a national, and subsequently local level, there has been an increase in attention placed on BTFG activity and associated management, particularly within MPAs. DCO Birchenough informed Members that this has been related to a number of factors, including the proposal for two Private Members Bills, the first of which was withdrawn following a second reading in September 2024, the second titled the 'Marine Protected Areas (Bottom Trawling) (England) Bill' having undergone a first reading in the House of Commons and being timetabled for a second reading in May 2026, the release of the film 'Ocean' with David Attenborough which covered, as one of its topics, the debate on bottom trawling and dredging within MPAs and additional information appearing online including the Blue Marine Foundation #TheBottomLine Campaign and a contextual article from Seafish in response to the 'Ocean' film. DCO Birchenough also outlined that the MMO Stage 3 MPA consultation, as previously referenced by the CEO, had been launched on 9th June 2025 relating to BTFG management.

DCO Birchenough stated that in response to the conversation on BTFG and associated management, the Authority had been consulted on the development and publication of a

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 21st August 2025

Southern IFCA position statement to provide local context on BTFG management in the Southern IFCA District, the role of fishers as key custodians of sustainable marine environment and how well managed fisheries can continue to co-exist alongside the attainment of conservation objectives in the inshore waters, harbours and estuaries across the District, in turn supporting local coastal communities. DCO Birchenough informed Members that the position statement 'Providing some local context on the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear debate' had been published on the Southern IFCA website and social media platforms on 17th June 2025, the statement having then been further updated to reflect the ratification of the BTFG Byelaw 2023, a copy of the updated statement having been provided to Members as part of this agenda item.

Mr R Stride queried whether the calculated percentage coverage of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) by BTFG prohibitions included the Solent and Dorset Coast SPA and if so whether excluding this SPA from the calculations, based on its large spatial footprint, the percentage coverage for MPAs increases. DCO Birchenough confirmed that the calculations did include this SPA and confirmed that if this SPA is excluded from the calculations the percentage coverage of MPAs by BTFG prohibitions increases to c.80%.

61. Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Fishery 2025 season catch data

IFCO Churchouse provided a progress update to Members on the monthly analysis of Manila clam Landings Per Unit Effort (LPUE) data under the Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Fishery Monitoring & Control Plan (M&CP) for the 2025/26 season. IFCO Churchouse provided a brief overview of the introduction of the M&CP and outlined that this monthly analysis formed part of the In-Season Monitoring Programme under the M&CP and aims to track catch data to assess the status of the fishery during the season. The in-season monitoring is not linked a control mechanism but provides information to supporting ongoing monitoring and information to inform any Authority decisions in the event that a control mechanism is activated under either the On-Site Monitoring Programme or the SPA Monitoring Programme.

IFCO Churchouse provided detail on the LPUE values for the months of May and June 2025 as outlined in the paper and verbally provided detail of LPUE values for July 2025 as the most recent month in the fishing season, reporting an LPUE of 91.48 kg/day which represents a 22.2% increase on the same month during the 2024 season. For all three months the LPUE values for 2025 are higher than the corresponding months in the previous years, they remain lower than those for the period 2020-2023 but above those for 2016-2019. IFCO Churchouse informed Members that there had been high catches of cockle at the beginning of the 2025/26 fishing season. IFCO Churchouse outlined that Southern IFCA will continue to monitor the trends of harvested stocks throughout the 2025/26 fishing season in line with the M&CP and provided an overview of the Pilot Mid-Season Stock Observer Programme which had been carried out in August 2025 where CPUE data was collected from fishers to be compared to annual stock survey data. Permit Holders had been very supportive of this process and had assisted Officers in obtaining the relevant samples.

Mr G Wordsworth raised that comparing catch rates to those seen in 2016-2020 needed to account for that data being up to 10 years old and that harvesting methods in the fishery have become more sophisticated over time and therefore catch levels would be expected to be higher. Mr Wordsworth stated that the comparisons to 2021-2023 data would be more representative on this basis. It was discussed that mortality had been reported in the Manila clam in 2025 as well as in 2024 by stakeholders undertaking hand gathering and therefore it should still be considered that the stock is declining despite an uptick in catch levels. It was also discussed that from observations there appears to be only one year class coming through as a smaller range of sizes are being seen with many individuals just over the MCRS of 35mm.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 21st August 2025

DCO Birchenough commented that whilst some Permit Holders have developed fishing gear for increased efficiency this is not universal across all Permit Holders and that those engaging in the fishery are fishing at different levels. PDCO Dell added that there are restrictions on the fishing gear through the Permit Conditions which achieve high levels of compliance.

Dr S Cripps queried the use of kg/day as a metric. It was discussed that during reporting of catch data during the 2024 season, it was highlighted by Permit Holders that the calculation of Landings Per Unit Effort (LPUE) as kg/m of dredge/hour was not easily understood and to be able to relate data to their fishing practice kg/day was preferred. Southern IFCA reported in 2024 using both kg/day and kg/m of dredge/hour and use the latter in internal calculations when considering seasonal analysis of data.

The Chairman commented that from the Southern IFCA Poole Harbour Bivalve Survey Report 2025, the size frequency distribution suggested the fishing gear was well tuned to fishing Manila clam at MCRS and commented that it was positive to see Manila clam at or above MCRS in the samples despite the targeted fishery. Mr R Stride queried whether the same dredge was used in the Southern IFCA Poole Harbour Bivalve Survey each year, it was confirmed that as much as possible the same vessel and same equipment is used each year although this is based on skipper availability. Mr S Kingston-Turner asked whether juvenile samples are taken, it was confirmed that samples of undersized Manila clam are also sought using a second methodology using sediment samples but that this was not exhaustive, the ability to fully survey juvenile populations requires significant resource input.

Members discussed the need for a separate Working Group to discuss data gathering and analysis in the Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Fishery in more detail and further explore potential impacting factors on the trends in stock data.

Recommendation

62. That a Working Group of interested TAC Members be held to discuss data gathering and analysis in the Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Fishery.

63. Live Wrasse Fishery 2025 season

Senior IFCO Condie informed Members that, in line with information received ahead of the usual start of the District's Live Wrasse Fishery Season on 1st July, there had been no active Live Wrasse Fishery take place in 2025. Senior IFCO Condie outlined that this was due to live wrasse being sought from the Scottish live wrasse fishery which opened in May.

Members discussed whether the absence of a live wrasse fishery in 2025 would potentially change perceptions from other sectors of a lack of wrasse species being found in Dorset.

ITEMS FOR DECISION

64. Black Seabream Co-Developed Principles Consultation Outcome

DCO Birchenough provided Members with a summary of outcomes following the conclusion of a Black Seabream (BSB) Consultation which proposed a number of Co-Developed (CoD) Principles which collectively seek to provide additional protections for BSB during the recognised breeding season across three Dorset Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs), in addition to supporting increased understandings of the Black Seabream fishery.

Senior IFCO Condie detailed the consultation which had taken place and that both in-person and online engagement options had been made available to stakeholders including coastal drop-in sessions, a targeted industry workshop, coastal engagement, community forums,

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 21st August 2025

stakeholder group meetings, an online meeting and an online questionnaire. Senior IFCO Condie informed Members that the consultation received 128 responses, the highest number ever received by Southern IFCA during an informal consultation. DCO Birchenough stated that the overriding message from the consultation is that the BSB community are engaged and are supportive of the CoD approach and want to continue to work with Southern IFCA to ensure the future health of the BSB population.

Senior IFCO Condie summarised the specific consultation outcomes for each of the Co-Developed Principles. DCO Birchenough reiterated that there had been majority support through the consultation for each of the CoD Principles which had been very positive. DCO Birchenough outlined that some Member Discussion Areas had been identified from specific points raised through a few consultation responses, covering Maximum Conservation Reference Size (MaxCRS), the recreational bag limit and the data collection scheme as detailed in the report with contextual information and potential mitigations also provided for Members consideration.

Members discussed MaxCRS and that the potential for an increase in the number of smaller fish being removed as a result, with it being felt that this would be mitigated by having the CoD Principle of a recreational bag limit of 6 fish per person per day. Members also discussed that for the commercial sector having a MaxCRS would not result in more fishing being caught for in a single trip, for example using a net, as methods of fishing are set up to already support preferred harvesting practices. PDCO Dell provided context on the three relevant commercial fishers who have expressed a willingness to provide data to Southern IFCA to help inform understandings on catch composition. DCO Birchenough outlined that, in implementing any measures, it will be important to provide education as to the rationale for the CoD Principles and the ability of the Principles collectively to support the sustainability of the population.

Members supported proceeding with the CoD Principles for MCRS and MaxCRS considering the consultation outcomes.

Members discussed a recreational bag limit of 6 fish per person per day and the potential risk of high-grading. DCO Birchenough outlined that, as previously discussed, CoD Principles collectively complement one another with the MaxCRS providing a mitigation to the risk of removing breeding males if high-grading were to occur.

The Chairman suggested that the 6 fish per person per day is carried forward and that information is sought from stakeholders following implementation as to the response to this CoD Principle and how it is being received and complied with, noting the potential to review in future years. Members also discussed that if appropriate handling practices are followed and fish are maintained in good condition then even if high-grading did occur the fish that are returned should be in good health. DCO Birchenough outlined that these elements are being explored for inclusion in the Guidance CoD Principle along with elements such as returning breeding males which would help offset breeding males being kept on vessels rather than being returned, further illustrating how the CoD Principles are designed to work together to achieve an overall beneficial outcome. Members reiterated the importance of education to accompany the CoD Principles.

Members supported proceeding with the CoD Principle for a recreational bag limit.

Members discussed the CoD Principle of a data collection program and the positive outcome of the consultation with a consensus that a data collection program should be implemented, recognising the need to deconflict where possible with existing sources of data collection.

Members supported proceeding with the CoD Principle for a data collection program.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 21st August 2025

Mr R Stride queried whether the issue of CoD Principles being proposed to be voluntary rather than statutory had been raised through the consultation. DCO Birchenough outlined that the opportunity had been provided through the consultation for participants to raise any points they wished in relation to the proposals and that 6 out of the 128 responses had referenced that the CoD Principles should be statutory rather than voluntary. It was discussed that there was a steer from the Seabreams FMP to suggest that initial outcomes in the short to medium term would most likely be explored as non-statutory based on evidence gaps which exist for the species and that guidance from Defra for IFCA in developing management is to explore non-statutory measures first. Members discussed that voluntary measures are appropriate at this stage and, in the event that further data gathering indicates this is not suitable then the Authority has the ability to introduce statutory measures.

The recommendations in the paper were proposed by Mr C Francis and were seconded by Mr G Wordsworth. All Members were in favour, with the exception of Mr M Cornwell who abstained.

Resolved

65. That the Co-Developed Principles are finalised to take forward as one of the management tools to be implemented in the BSB fishery.

66. That Officers prepare a BSB Management Intervention Package in accordance with Section 5.0.

67. Southern IFCA Solent Scallop Research Programme

IFCO Churchouse provided Members with an overview of current research carried out within the Solent Scallop Fishery, and a proposal to create the wider Solent Scallop (SCE) Research Programme, aiming to further the understandings of the fishery by collectively providing data to inform local management and contribute at a national level to the King Scallop FMP and UK King Scallop Fishery Improvement Project.

IFCO Churchouse outlined that based on existing research and discussions with the external Environmental Assessment of Scallop Innovation Gear (EASIG) Fisheries Industry Science Partnership (FISP) Project, it had been determined that there was the potential for wider research in the Solent SCE Fishery which could be carried out by Southern IFCA. IFCO Churchouse detailed that the Solent SCE Research Programme would bring together current research and three new research projects to deliver a holistic programme that aims to answer key questions and facilitate improved understandings. IFCO Churchouse outlined that the delivery of the Programme would span the 2025/26 and 2026/27 financial years, with the new research projects covering 1) additions to the current Solent SCE Survey to quantify empty shell, bycatch and assess SCE condition, 2) a desk-based study to identify key fishing areas in the Solent across both the SCE fishery and other Solent fisheries to identify areas of overlap and inform marine planning and 3) a gear trial research project to compare different dredge types specifically within the small-scale Solent SCE Fishery to complement national research.

DCO Birchenough outlined that if Members resolved to recommend the establishment of a Solent SCE Research Programme, then relevant budgetary considerations would be fully detailed and discussed with the Executive Sub-Committee and the Authority at the appropriate meetings.

The CEO thanked IFCO Churchouse for her work in developing this programme and highlighted the importance of carrying out research to complement that being carried out at a national level to ensure that the small-scale inshore sector continues to be represented and can provide input to national level discussions such as through the King Scallop FMP.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 21st August 2025

The recommendations in the paper were proposed by Mr R Stride and were seconded by Mr S Kingston-Turner. All Members voted in favour.

Resolved

68. That Members recommend the establishment of a Solent Scallop Research Programme incorporating the research projects detailed in Annex 1.

GUEST SPEAKER:

69. The Inshore and Small Scale Fisheries Consortium

Members received a presentation from Mr Simon Pengelly, Senior Technical Officer at the AIFCA. Mr Pengelly presented on 'Securing sustainable inshore fisheries in the UK: a vision for thriving small-scale coastal communities' covering the aim and composition of The Inshore and Small Scale Fisheries Consortium (ISSF), as a group of organisations spanning academic, environmental NGO, fishermen organisations and regulators who share a collective concern about the decline in the inshore fishing fleet. Mr Pengelly described engagement events aiming to understand the causes of decline and to co-create solutions to maintain thriving and sustainable inshore and small-scale fishing livelihoods in England and the seven priorities which had emerged. Mr Pengelly covered further engagement intentions and ongoing policy engagement opportunities, including a National ISSF Conference scheduled for 4th – 5th February 2026 in Newcastle with the aim of agreeing feasible actions for a viable, diverse, accessible inshore fleet and to have broader engagement with the fishing community, policy makers and the public.

Members discussed the positive direction of the ISSF and the benefits/concerns which can come with a Consortium comprising regulators and NGOs as well as industry recognising that ultimately this approach allows for different approaches to be discussed and opportunities for collective working. Members discussed the National ISSF Conference and highlighted the importance of Defra attendance as well as the need to progress identified actions with a collective consensus. The Chairman suggested the Dorset Coast Forum as an avenue for further engagement.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

70. REM & AI Project Interim Report

Members received a presentation from IFCO Payton and IFCO Bedwell on the interim report for the REM & AI Project. IFCO Bedwell reviewed the five overarching objectives of the report and described to Members how Southern IFCA have been working with companies to secure technology delivery. The presentation reviewed two pilot fisheries under the project, the first looking at BTFG and the second looking at netting and potting fisheries. IFCO Bedwell described to Members how the technology operated on each vessel and the data outputs which could be achieved. An overview of project costings to date was provided and IFCO Bedwell summarised the next steps in the project including engagement Defra on outcomes and process and aligning work with other IFCA through a proposed National IFCA REM Strategy.

Members discussed the AI element of the technology and the need for high resolution footage and compatible camera systems. IFCO Bedwell explained that the development of AI is ongoing, and discussion is proposed with Marine Scotland to look further at how AI can be used. PDCO Dell commented that developments were being made to improve the quality of video capture which can then be used to teach an AI, looking to achieve this collaboratively at a national level.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 21st August 2025

Dr Cripps emphasised the importance of looking at where REM/AI is being used in other fisheries including internationally to determine lessons learned and share knowledge. IFCO Bedwell identified that this had formed part of the literature review for the Project and learning from other projects was ongoing through this workstream.

Mr R Stride stated that the project needed to learn from the VMS process and the benefits of using REM/AI across all groups (regulators and industry) needed to be well understood to ensure the cost effectiveness of any wider roll out. PDCO Dell outlined that the testing which is being achieved through this project is informing these discussions and allowing for costs and benefits to be fully understood.

71. Poole Harbour Bivalve Survey Report 2025

Senior IFCO Condie provided Members with an overview of the Poole Harbour Bivalve Survey Report 2025, outlining the survey process and detailing key points from the analysis.

Senior IFCO Condie informed Members that whilst Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) data and landings data showed some fluctuations for both common cockle and Manila clam, statistical analysis showed no significant differences in the total CPUE and total landings across Poole Harbour as a whole over the last three years, indicating that stocks currently remain stable and the fishery continues to operate sustainably under current management.

Senior IFCO Condie outlined that Southern IFCA had monitored the sustainability of Manila clam stocks through the Monitoring & Control Plan for the fishery for the first time ahead of the 2025 season with analysis under the On-Site Monitoring Programme on landings data from the 2024 fishing season and data from the 2025 Poole Harbour Bivalve Survey. For the 2025 fishing season the Authority resolved that no additional management intervention was required to support a sustainable fishery.

Members discussed the increase in landings of common cockle and that the price per kg had increased as well as the levels of Manila clam declining which had focused effort on the common cockle fishery. Mr G Wordsworth stated that the increase in cockles may have come from areas where fishing has resulted in ground being clearer from weed and thus allowed for increased spat settlement.

The Chairman commented on the size frequency data and that this indicates the fishing gear has become well-tuned to the MCRS of the target species and is minimising bycatch.

72. Fisheries Management Plans

Project Officer Wright provided an overview of the matters captured in the Executive Summary. PO Wright also informed Members that the King Scallop Implementation Group (SIG) was seeking representatives from the <15m sector.

The Chairman asked whether the request by the KSIG had been disseminated, DCO Birchenough confirmed that the information had been passed to relevant stakeholders who are invited to contact Defra directly if they are interested in sitting on the group.

73. New Southern IFCA Byelaw Book

Senior IFCO Condie showed Members the newly formatted Southern IFCA Byelaw Book, available on the Southern IFCA website, outlining the updates that had been made and the improvements to formatting to aid stakeholders in using the Byelaw Book to quickly and easily find information on Southern IFCA regulations.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 21st August 2025

Members discussed whether a link could be added to the Byelaw Book to download closed areas, whether there can be a physical copy made available as well as the digital version and whether stakeholders have provided any feedback on the accessibility of the newly formatted version. DCO Birchenough outlined that providing a link to download closed areas is not currently possible but, as described by PDCO Dell earlier in the agenda, Officers are progressing new methods of providing coordinates of closed areas to industry for inclusion on plotters. DCO Birchenough outlined that there is the potential for relevant sections of the Byelaw Book to be made available in hard copy on request and that as part of general engagement on the coast, Officers will pick up on any stakeholder thoughts on the updated Byelaw Book and ease of use.

74. Date of Next Meeting

To confirm the date of the next meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee on the 6th November 2025 at Southern IFCA, Unit 3 Holes Bay Park, Sterte Avenue West, Poole Dorset BH15 2AA.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 16:48.

Chairman:

Date:

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

EXTRAORDINARY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 20th OCTOBER 2025

Minutes of the Extraordinary Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), held in the meeting room at the Southern IFCA office in Poole at **14:00 on 20th October 2025**.

Present

Mr Richard Stride	Acting Chair, Vice Chair & MMO Appointee
Cllr Paul Fuller	Acting Vice Chairman, Isle of Wight Council
Dr Heidi Guille	MMO Appointee
Mr Gary Wordsworth	MMO Appointee
Mr Mark Cornwell	MMO Appointee
Mr Stuart Kingston-Turner	Environment Agency
Ms Pia Bateman	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Principal Deputy Chief Officer (PDCO) Sam Dell, Deputy Chief Officer (DCO) Dr Sarah Birchenough, Senior Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer (SIFCO) Mr Adam Parry, IFCO Ms Hester Churchouse were also present. IFCOs Mr William Meredith-Davies, Ms Chelsea Perrins and Project Officer (PO) Ms Imogen Wright were present online.

Mr Steve Boyd (commercial fisher and Solent Dredge Permit 2025/26 Nominated Representative) and Mr Ryan Tyers (commercial fisher and Solent Dredge Permit 2025/26 Applicant) attended in person in the public gallery.

Apologies

1. Apologies for absence were received from Dr Antony Jensen (MMO Appointee), Ms Elisabeth Bussey-Jones (MMO Appointee), Mr Colin Francis (MMO Appointee), Dr Simon Cripps (MMO Appointee), Dr Richard Morgan (Natural England), Ms Rachel Irish (Marine Management Organisation).

Declarations of interest

2. There were no non-pecuniary or pecuniary interests declared.

ITEM FOR DECISION

3. Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw: Review of Permit Conditions under Category A Permit

The CEO outlined that, following the presentation of data from the Southern IFCA Solent Scallop Survey 2025 at a Members Working Group on the 9th October 2025, Members determined that there was a need to explore ways to reduce effort in the scallop fishery and subsequently agreed to take forward draft proposals to public consultation as a starting point for discussions with Applicants for a Category A Permit for the 2025/26 season on potential additional effort management. The CEO thanked Members and Applicants for their input into this process, reflecting that the level of engagement had been very high, with 80% of applicants engaging in the consultation and 63% attending one of the Community Forum Meetings. The CEO outlined that the input and expertise provided through the consultation had helped to inform new Co-Developed proposals and demonstrated the commitment and investment of Applicants in the Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw (SDPB) fishery, further demonstrated by representatives attending the meeting.

DCO Birchenough also expressed her thanks to all Applicants for their levels of participation in the consultation. DCO Birchenough provided an outline of the consultation and different methods of engagement available including in-person meetings and the sending out of a consultation document with Applicants able to provide individual responses. DCO

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY EXTRAORDINARY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 20th OCTOBER 2025

Birchenough provided an overview of responses to specific questions asked through the consultation, outlining that the initial two proposals taken to consultation had both received limited support in their current forms and that additional information and proposals had been received as well as socio-economic information on potential impacts including economic, social and wellbeing aspects.

DCO Birchenough then summarised the staged approach which had been taken in analysing consultation feedback and conducting feasibility checks on potential management options, the first stage comprising the identification of alternative options, the second stage being a review of those alternative options, the third stage being the development of two new Co-Developed Proposals and the fourth stage being a review of the Co-Developed Proposals against a Management Options Matrix which considered each Proposal (both the Co-Developed and those taken to consultation) against a number of considerations ranging from the overarching IFCA values and purpose to the impacts of intervention. At each stage DCO Birchenough outlined any elements from the consultation which had not been taken through to the following stage and the associated rationale, as detailed in the agenda report, and outlined the detail of the resulting two Co-Developed Proposals.

DCO Birchenough outlined the potential next steps following the meeting including the intention of Officers to commence a wider review of the SDPB fishery in 2026 to encompass consideration of a longer-term management plan.

Ms H Guille requested clarity on how potential percentages of effort reduction had been calculated for each proposal. DCO Birchenough outlined that the percentages were based on consideration of the total time available to fish for scallop under current permit conditions against the total time available to fish for scallop under proposed permit conditions taking account of an identified potential effort level of 38 vessels fishing for scallop during the 2025/26 season. DCO Birchenough explained that it is understood that vessels in the fishery do not utilise all available time during the season but that this calculation provides a proxy for reduction in effort that can be compared between different proposals.

The Chairman invited Mr Steve Boyd to address the Members in relation to the agenda item.

Mr Steve Boyd outlined that he had engaged with Applicants in Warsash and Portsmouth and with the exception of one vessel from Portsmouth, the Applicants were in agreement for Mr Boyd to represent them at the TAC Meeting. Mr Boyd outlined that Applicants understood that there needed to be a reduction in effort but were not supportive of the two Co-Developed Proposals with respect to the fishing season starting on 1st December rather than 1st November. Mr Boyd outlined that the loss of November as a fishing month would have socio-economic impacts on the Applicants as well as their crew through loss of earnings across both the scallop and Manila clam fisheries and an inability to attract or retain crew to work on vessels. Mr Boyd outlined that earnings this year had been poor generally and Applicants had invested in the Solent Dredge Fishery in anticipation of starting to fish on 1st November. Mr Boyd discussed the Southern IFCA Solent dredge fishery surveys, expressing concern about comparisons between previous years' data and this year on the basis of a change in methodology and a previous situation where low stock levels from survey results preceded a fishing season of high scallop landings.

Mr Steve Boyd put forward an alternative proposal of the scallop fishery opening on 1st November 2025 with daily fishing hours of 08:00-14:00 until 30th November, maintaining the five days per week available for scallop fishing which is currently in place, with a meeting being held with Southern IFCA on 1st December, where every Permit Holder does not fish on this day but attends the meeting, to review additional evidence including catch data for scallop from the fishery from November and data on mortality of scallops from causes such as

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY EXTRAORDINARY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 20th OCTOBER 2025

predation or other environmental factors. At the meeting a determination would be made if further effort management was required for the remaining months of the season (to 31st March) or whether to remove additional hour restrictions, to include consideration of closing the scallop fishery if the data indicated this was required.

Mr Boyd outlined that alternative daily fishing hours for the month of November could be 08:00-12:00, however this had not been widely discussed with other Applicants. Mr Boyd stated that both options would result in the same level of effort reduction as was being sought by the two Co-Developed Proposals.

Members discussed the proposal put forward by Mr Boyd.

Members sought clarity from Mr Boyd that he was representing all the Applicants in the fishery, Mr Boyd stated that he was representing of the majority of the Applicants who intended to fish for scallop in the coming season and had spent the weekend speaking to as many as possible to seek their input, which had included fishers in Lymington, Portsmouth and Warsash. Mr Wordsworth asked for some further information about this process of engagement and how the Applicants had reached the suggested proposal and asked why that was different to the feedback received via the consultation. Mr Boyd outlined that Applicants had responded to the consultation but then had had a period of time to think it over, as he and others felt that the consultation was rushed.

Members thanked Mr Boyd for his contributions.

The Members discussed the IFCA duty to balance the needs of all users and that the proposal for 08:00-12:00, having not been widely commented on by Applicants would require consideration of potential socio-economic impacts, for example based on a vessel's steaming distance and associated fuel costs, however it was also discussed that early months in the season being better for markets may offset those additional costs.

Members discussed management interventions starting in December and the potential risk of increased effort as a result of anticipation of further restrictions following a 1st December meeting, as suggested by Mr Boyd. They also discussed the catch return timelines and the time it took to analyse this data, as well as the challenges associated with the suggested December review timeframe but recognised the potential for effort reduction through daily fishing hours equating to a similar level of effort reduction as that proposed through the Co-Developed Principles.

Members requested the level of effort reduction provided by Mr Boyd's proposal. DCO Birchenough stated that looking at the month of November only, comparing the current available hours to the proposal of an 08:00-14:00 or an 08:00-12:00 daily fishing time, the percentage effort reduction would be c.41% or c.60% respectively. Mr G Wordsworth commented that starting the scallop season on 1st November would also remove the need for additional management in the Manila clam fishery to avoid unintended consequences, stating that there is not an indication based on best available evidence that the Manila clam fishery requires additional management and it should not be subject to measures as a result of the scallop fishery considering the potential socio-economic impacts.

Members also considered the level of effort reduction which could be achieved by applying a daily fishing time of 08:00-14:00 for all months during a season from 1st November to 31st March which, based on the potential for 38 fishers fishing for scallop, resulted in a c.42% reduction in fishing time compared to current conditions. Members further discussed that the percentages calculated on the basis of fishing hours may not represent true effort due to effort levels varying in different months of the season but recognised the use of the current

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY EXTRAORDINARY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 20th OCTOBER 2025

calculations as a proxy for effort reduction based on the information available.

Members discussed the application of an 08:00-13:00 daily fishing time as a compromise between 08:00-14:00, discussing that, as with 08:00-12:00 this was not a time period which had been put forward through the consultation responses and therefore it was difficult to gauge what support there would be from Applicants for this as a proposal. Members queried whether any consultation responses had referenced an 08:00-14:00 daily fishing time, IFCO Churchouse confirmed that 7 individual responses and 1 group response had referenced this daily fishing time.

Members discussed compliance & enforcement aspects of all proposals, PDCO Dell confirmed that all proposed measures were able to be monitored and enforced appropriately.

Members discussed the need to consider input provided from Applicants at this meeting, in addition to that provided during the consultation, taking into account the short-time frame available for the consultation, alongside the Co-Developed proposals and the best available evidence to reach an appropriate solution. It was discussed that effort reduction would need to be applied to the whole season due to the infeasibility of data being available at a sufficient level to inform a further decision in December. Members also discussed data from the January mid-season Solent Scallop Survey, considering that if action were to be taken on the basis of data from this survey a determination on what action to take would also need to be made at this TAC meeting to avoid having to repeat the full review process. It was also discussed that the January mid-season survey occurs after the majority of effort has taken place therefore to intervene at this point may not achieve the required level of effort management based on current survey data.

Members also discussed that if environmental variables are playing a role in the levels of scallop stock in the Solent, then effort reduction would seek to support a sustainable fishery but there may still be stock impacts, however the IFCA should act to support sustainability and aim to maintain the fishery for future years recognising that the current consideration is for effort management for the coming season only, with the view to developing a longer-term management plan. The environmental parameter of Chlorophyll was discussed with available external data indicating that there had been no Chlorophyll peak in 2025 but equally this had also occurred in 2022 when there were no concerns with the scallop stock from survey results.

Members also reflected on the Southern IFCA Solent Scallop Research Programme which was agreed by the TAC at the August meeting and the intention to collect additional data from the surveys including a quantification of scallop shell which would help inform additional information on the scallop fishery over time, supporting the identified need by Applicants to explore mortality in the stock.

Mr G Wordsworth asked for Members to consider the following proposal:

A reduction in fishing effort in the Solent scallop fishery for the forthcoming season (2025/26), as achieved via the following measures:

- a. A reduction in daily fishing hours from 08:00-16:00 to 08:00-14:00

Mr Wordsworth was invited to speak to his proposal by the Chairman. Mr Wordsworth stated that the proposal achieved the level of reduction being sought of over 40% and considered socio-economic impacts put forward by Applicants. Mr Wordsworth also stated that the proposal removes any impact on the Manila clam fishery.

Cllr P Fuller expressed support for this proposal and stated that the fishery should continue to

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY EXTRAORDINARY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 20th OCTOBER 2025

be monitored during the coming season and consideration given to how to other issues raised over the longer-term such as mortality might be able to be monitored in the future.

The Chairman invited the proposal from Mr Wordsworth for consideration by the Membership. The proposal was seconded by Cllr P Fuller. As the proposal was carried, Mr Wordsworth then proposed Co-Developed Proposal 3, which Cllr P Fuller seconded. All Members were in favour.

Resolved

4. That a reduction in fishing effort in the Solent scallop fishery for the forthcoming season (2025/26), as achieved via the following measures:

- a. A reduction in daily fishing hours from 08:00-16:00 to 08:00-14:00

5. Date of Next Meeting

To confirm the date of the next meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee on the 6th November 2025 to be held virtually via MS Teams.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 15:46.

Chairman:

Date:

Black Seabream Management Package: Progress Update

Report by DCO Birchenough

A. Purpose

For Members to receive an update on the development of the Black Seabream Management Package which collectively seeks to demonstrate how Southern IFCA are achieving two parallel Policy Objectives to fulfil legal duties in relation to three Dorset Marine Conservation Zones to support sustainable fisheries for black seabream.

1.0 Background

- Black Seabream (BSB) are designated as features of three Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) in Dorset; Purbeck Coast MCZ, Poole Rocks MCZ and Southbourne Rough MCZ.
- Under Section 154(1) of the Marine & Coastal Access Act (MaCAA), Southern IFCA must ‘...seek to ensure that the conservation objectives of any MCZ in the District are furthered...’, with Section 154(2) requiring that ‘...nothing in Section 153(2) is to affect the performance of the duty...’.
- In developing Southern IFCA’s understanding of the brief to inform decision making for BSB management in the three Dorset MCZs, encompassing understanding the route of designation, the relevant Conservation Objectives (COs) and exploring early stages of policy development, founded upon the requirements under MaCAA Section (154), **the BSB review was split into two parallel streams of work, each having independent policy objectives and legislative underpinnings.**

Primary Policy Objective – MaCAA 154

Managing BSB as a designated feature of Marine Conservation Zones

Secondary Policy Objective – MaCAA 153

Improve understandings of BSB across the Dorset MCZs

- The Secondary Policy Objective was underpinned by a series of **Policy Drivers** and **Headline Objectives**, the latter providing a rationale for the exploration of additional management solutions to both complement the protections already afforded by existing management, satisfying Southern IFCA’s duties under Section (154) of MaCAA, as well as advancing understandings of the health of the BSB fishery over time.

1) To improve understandings of BSB behaviors, fisheries and ecosystem management, recognising that these are currently data poor.

(2) To be proportionate in the application of precaution, complementing existing statutory measures for lower impact fisheries (adaptive management approach).

(3) To be precautionary, as despite evidence suggesting that current effort is not having an impact, this remains data poor. Additionally, potential future impact also remains unknown.

(1) To ensure current and future sustainability of BSB populations for the benefit of the marine environment and all sectors.

(2) To improve understanding via data collection.

(3) to monitor and review measures (adaptive management).

(4) include users in policy development and ongoing management interventions.

- The co-development of shared principles to deliver the Secondary Policy Objective followed a five-stage process with Authority Members and Dorset Community.

2.0 Satisfying Policy Objectives

• Primary Policy Objective

- Through a combination of existing statutory measures including the Southern IFCA Bottom Towed Fishing Gear (BTFG) Byelaw 2023, the Southern IFCA Minimum Conservation Reference Size (MCRS) Byelaw and external spatial restrictions via an exclusion zone in the Purbeck MCZ by the MOD, the COs for BSB across the three MCZs are determined to be furthered and accordingly will not hinder the achievement of the COs, thus satisfying the Primary Policy Objective in accordance with Section 154 duties under MaCAA.

• Secondary Policy Objective

- The introduction of voluntary Co-Developed Principles (Figure 1) across the entire footprint of the three Dorset MCZs during the recognised BSB breeding period, provides a suitable management mechanism

by which Southern IFCA can both satisfy and facilitate progress towards the overarching goal of the Secondary Policy Objective, which is to advance understandings of BSB fisheries over time. This approach provides a mechanism which satisfies Policy Drivers and Headline Objectives which frame the Secondary Policy Objective.

Application of CoD Principles:	
Voluntary, applying within the 3 Dorset MCZs, and in force during the period 1 st April to 31 st July.	
Proposed CoD Principles:	
Minimum Conservation Reference Size	28cm
Maximum Conservation Reference Size	38cm
Recreational Bag Limit	6 fish per person per day
Guidance	Good practice fishing & handling
Data Collection	Year-round, all sectors

Figure 1: Co-Developed Principles for BSB Fisheries in the Purbeck Coast MCZ, Poole Rocks MCZ and Southbourne Rough MCZ.

3.0 Management Intentions & Review Process

- The development of the BSB Management Package is underpinned by policy and supporting documents:
 - Process Document 1 – Delivering Policy Objectives**
 - Providing detail of Southern IFCA's delivery under each Policy Objective, and how the Authority has satisfied the Policy Objective in delivering management.
 - Process Document 2 – Decision Making & Roadmap**
 - Providing detail on understanding the brief to inform decision making, the process followed by the Authority in developing the BSB Management Package and how this led to the development of management tools to satisfy each Policy Objective.
 - Process Document 3 – Management Tools, Application & Review**
 - Outlining the detail of management tools which support BSB fisheries within the three Dorset MCZs with detail on the scope and the provisions each tool provides, defined by the relevant Policy Objectives. Detail is also given on monitoring compliance, data collection and the process by which a review process will be used to ensure an adaptive management approach.
 - MCZ Conservation Package**
 - Containing the staged process for MCZ Assessments for all three MCZs, supported by a Black Seabream Literature Review and a Black Seabream Site Specific Evidence Packages document
 - BSB Fishery Guidance**
 - To support the 'guidance' CoD Principle by delivering fishery guidance to support sustainable BSB fisheries, incorporating elements discussed with Members and the Dorset Community through the co-development process
- Members of the Technical Advisory Sub-Committee (TAC) considered recommendations relating to the delivery of the Primary and Secondary Policy Objectives at an Extraordinary meeting of the TAC on 4th December 2025. Outcomes of this meeting will be summarised verbally at the Authority meeting.

4.0 Next Steps

- Notwithstanding any resolutions made by the TAC, it is intended that the Co-Developed Principles will be introduced for 1st April 2026 with the year 1 focus being on **engagement, raising awareness and seeking compliance** with the CoD Principles.
- Southern IFCA recognise that BSB fisheries are data poor, as such an adaptive management approach, as facilitated under the Secondary Policy Objective, allows Southern IFCA to robustly respond to BAE in a timely way to ensure the future sustainability of the fisheries in Dorset. A defined review process is set out in the policy document; **Process Document 3 – Management Tools, Application & Review** and it is intended that the first annual review be commenced post 31st July 2026 in line with the defined process.
- Policy and supporting documentation under the BSB Management Package will be made available via the Southern IFCA website.

Budget Control Statement

Report by The CEO and Chartered Accountant

A. Purpose

To provide Members with a summary of the Authority's accounts for the period 1st April 2025 to 30th September 2025.

B. Recommendation

That the report be received.

C. Annex

Annex 1: Detailed Budget Control Statement with contextual narrative.

1.0 Budget Control Statement

- 1.1 The Summary Budget Control Statement to 30th September 2025, as shown below, shows a deficit of c.56k against budget.

SUMMARY RESULTS Major Budget Headers	Apr25-Mar26 12 mths Budget incl. inflation	YTD 1 Apr 25 - 31 July 25		
		Actual	Budget	Variances
EXPENDITURE SUMMARY				
Compliance and Enforcement	124,317	47,688	67,534	(19,846)
Research and Policy	34,259	3,441	18,152	(14,711)
Business Services	1,129,589	543,133	574,953	(31,820)
Capital Equipment	127,635	48,712	63,818	(15,106)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	1,415,800	642,974	724,457	(81,483)
TOTAL INCOME	1,211,658	1,030,087	1,167,506	(137,419)
INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	(204,142)	387,113	443,049	(55,936)

- 1.2 The Detailed Budget Control Statement (Annex 1) provide a narrative of all positive and negative variance equal to or greater than 1k., in addition to contextual notes where necessary.

2.0 Summary of Major Budget Headers

- 2.1 The positive variance captured under the **Compliance & Enforcement** Header (c.20k) represents c.6k of savings on FPV fuel and c.2k maintenance costs, relating to operational prioritisation during the two quarters, seeing increased use of the drone and FPV Endeavour to align with the PHDP season. This is likely to even out over the course of the FY. PPE cost savings (c.3k) are likely to even out during the FY. A c.£2k payment to the MMO for access to a National Intelligence System (CLUE) is anticipated imminently. At this stage of the FY, c.£5k of savings are seen under the Prosecutions header, these costs are unpredictable and likely to even out over the course of the FY.

- 2.2 The positive variance captured under the **Research and Policy** Header (**c.14k**) relates mainly to no costs being incurred to date for Byelaw advertisement or legal support (c.5.5k) and c.£2k saving for the Drift Net Project, costs which may be incurred later in the FY, subject to community uptake. c.£1k is being held prior to reserve transfer for monies received from PHDP holders for costs associated with the offset of MSC Certification fees for the fishery (to reimburse monies that were paid upfront by Southern IFCA previously). Money (c.£2k) ringfenced for Solent Scallop Research remains dependant on another IFCA providing training. An invoice for works associated with the Solent Bivalve stock assessment are pending (c.2k)
- 2.3 The positive variance captured under the **Business Services** Header (**c.32k**) is due to a reduction in staff salary and pension contributions (c.15k) as a result of one IFCO embarking on a sabbatical for the first 4 months of the FY, as well as the resignation of the Office Manager in June 2025 and a Senior Research & Policy IFCO in August. Costs associated with staff training (c.16k) will be realised later in the year (Q4). Increased and unforeseen costs associated with insurance premiums across the entirety of the business of c.4k have been incurred. This is a reflection of increased costs for services.
- 2.4 The positive variance under the **Capital Equipment** Header (c.15k) is due to savings in depreciation on FPV Protector. This FPV was budgeted to be replaced in Q1 with a cost of £120k resulting in higher depreciation in the budget. This replacement has been delayed- initially due to delays experienced in delivery of FPV Vigilant and the undertaking of an operational needs analysis, plus, more recently in order to await the outcomes of the 2026-2029 AIFCA SR Bid.

3.0 **Total Income**

A deficit in projected income of **c.137k** reflects the outstanding payment of project funding from Defra c.90k, in addition to c.50k, which relates to the potential sale of FPV Protector, which was budgeted for prior to experiencing the delays in procurement and delivery of FPV Vigilant. We may not complete this sale during the current FY. An amount c.4.5k relates to the anticipated issuing of commercial and recreational permits under the Pot Fishing Byelaw. This Byelaw remains with the MMO quality assurance team. It is likely that this delay is due to the national delivery of FMPs and Tranche 1 outcomes. BCP Shellfish Sampling contract (c.£3.5k will be realised later in the FY.

4.0 **Payment of Amounts Exceeding £5,000**

- 4.1 Paragraph (11) of Southern IFCA's Financial Regulations 2022 require that all ex. VAT payments over £5,000 (with the exception of salaries, PAYE, pension contributions and regular payments outside of the Financial Manager's control) are to be reported to the Authority via a BCS.
- 4.2 Between the 1st April 2025 and the 30th September 2025, the following payments equal to or greater than the above-mentioned figure were made:

Amount	Date	What	Who
£43,311.58	01/04/2025	Annual insurance premiums (vehicles, marine assets and estate)	Brunel Insurance Brokers
£14,342.42	17/06/2025	AIFCA Subscriptions 2025-2026	AIFCA

DETAILED RESULTS				Apr25-Mar26	YTD			YTD Notes for positive & negative variance ≥£1k
Minor Budget Headers				12 mths Budget	1 April 2025	30 September 2025	Variances	
Income	Levy	Levy - Hants		364,586	364,586	364,586	0	
		Levy - IOW		129,499	129,499	129,499	0	
		Levy - Dorset		223,684	223,684	223,684	0	
		Levy - BCP		100,563	100,563	100,563	0	
		Levy - Southampton		38,806	38,806	38,806	0	
	Permits & Leases	Levy - Portsmouth		45,302	45,302	45,302	0	
		Poole Harbour Dredge Permits		27,000	30,375	27,000	3,375	This is the extra £75 per permit referred to below for Poole Harbour Recertification
		Solent Dredge Permits Category A		0	0	0	0	
		Poole Order Aquaculture Leases		32,803	16,402	16,401	1	
		Net Fishing Permit		1,870	0	0	0	
	Other	Pot Fishing Permit: Commercial		3,600	0	3,600	(3,600)	Byelaw currently undergoing MMO Quality Assurance
		Pot Fishing Permit: Recreational		1,050	0	1,050	(1,050)	Byelaw currently undergoing MMO Quality Assurance
		BCP Council Shellfish Sampling		3,765	0	3,765	(3,765)	Not anticipated until later in the year
		Bank interest receivable		25,000	21,774	12,500	9,274	Levies received as lump sums so more in Reserve Bank Account in early months so more interest earned than pro rata split
		Unforseen income (including chartering)		2,800	5,016	1,400	3,616	£2,568.91 to MMO for Operation Stonebrook, £2,447.50 to D&S IFCA for 50% of REM costs for New Seeker
Compliance and Enforcement	Drone	Delta Spending Review 2025-2026 (SR25: part 1)		140,000	50,000	140,000	(90,000)	Not all money yet received from DEFRA
		Equipment Sale (profit/loss)		58,550	3,303	58,550	(65,247)	ES&K budgeted following possible sale of FPV Protector (on hold). Actuals reflect sale of van (sold for £8k, minus £810 auction commission, £80 tracker removal and £3,907 for final book value of vehicle)
		Court Costs Recovered		1,600	777	800	(23)	
		Income		1,211,688	1,030,087	1,167,506	(137,419)	
	Fisheries Protection Vessels	Maintenance		3,000	846	1,500	(854)	
		Fuel	FPV Endeavour	2,400	1,172	1,200	(28)	
			FPV Protector	12,000	1,637	6,000	(4,363)	Protector not refuelled in April and only on two dates in May, June, July & September and only one in August
			FPV Vigilant	24,000	10,079	12,000	(1,921)	Operational priorities in July meant less usage of Vigilant that month
		Maintenance	FPV Maintenance (combined 3 FPVs)	15,000	5,740	7,500	(1,770)	Mainly due to Endeavour 100-hour service & additional work then discovered and Vigilant 100-hour service
	Projects		Combined	8,871	2,952	2,936	16	
		Berthing	FPV Vigilant	9,996	5,062	4,998	64	
			REM AI NFB Project (with D&S IFCA) Phase 1	5,000	4,205	5,000	(795)	
			REM AI NFB Project (with D&S IFCA) Phase 2	5,000	4,895	5,000	(105)	
			Personal Protective Clothing	8,348	980	4,174	(3,198)	Expenditure has been relatively low this FY to date but this may change
	Other	Enforcement Equipment		3,000	1,791	1,500	291	
		Industry Compliance Aids		1,800	609	900	(291)	
		MOSS		750	0	750	(750)	
		CLUE Intelligence System (annual rolling costs)		8,152	3,222	4,076	(854)	
		Legal Services - Prosecutions		20,000	4,702	10,000	(5,298)	By its nature this expenditure is not spread evenly across the year and is unpredictable
Research & Policy	Developing Management		Expenditure	124,317	47,688	67,534	(19,846)	
		Byelaws - Adverts		9,059	0	4,548	(4,548)	No byelaws made yet this FY
		Legal Services - Byelaws		2,000	0	1,000	(1,000)	No byelaws made yet this FY
		Community Engagement		1,250	212	624	(412)	
				960	960	960	0	
	Monitoring Programme	Poole Bivalve Survey		4,320	1,920	2,880	(960)	
		Solent Bivalve Stock Assessment		2,880	480	1,440	(1,440)	Provision for a March invoice not yet received
		Whelk Sampling		600	174	0	174	
		Whelk Monitoring Programme Pilot CPUE		500	0	500	(500)	
		NFB Drift Net Project		2,000	0	2,000	(2,000)	Uncertain whether this will happen this FY
	Subscriptions & Memberships	Survey Equipment and Maintenance		800	380	400	(20)	
		Shellfish Association of GB		750	275	375	(100)	
		GIS Annual Licence		800	0	400	(400)	
		Poole Harbour MSC - Re-Certification 2022		1,025	0	1,025	(1,025)	Cost offset over a 5-year period by dredge permit additional £75 per permit
		Poole Harbour MSC - Annual Audit		5,275	0	0	0	
Business Services	Estate	Solent SDC research		2,000	0	2,000	(2,000)	Training needed from another IFCA in using camera equipment, so timing dependent on their (very limited) availability
		Expenditure		34,259	3,441	18,152	(14,711)	
		Office - General		14,100	4,748	7,050	(2,302)	These variances more or less offset one another
		Contractors & services		26,058	15,207	13,029	2,178	
		Office Rates		3,000	15,133	15,000	133	
	Finance	Equipment (<£500)		2,000	0	1,000	(1,000)	No expenditure YTD
		Miscellaneous		2,000	383	1,000	(617)	
		Financial Audit costs		3,600	0	0	0	
		Xero Software		396	262	168	98	
		Paycycle		2,367	1,619	1,184	435	
	Insurances	Bank charges		600	408	300	108	
		Personnel	Combined personnel	11,324	14,087	11,324	2,763	General increase in insurance premiums more than anticipated
		Vehicles		4,234	5,185	4,235	(950)	
		Marine Assets	Combined marine assets	22,457	23,467	22,457	1,010	General increase in insurance premiums more than anticipated
			Combined	4,510	1,545	2,256	(711)	
	Vehicle Fleet Management	Maintenance	Combined	4,328	370	2,164	(1,795)	Costs YTD are MOT & Service for HF17 YXS & 20 days' cancelled tracking with Teletrac
		Roadside Assistance (combined)		105	0	105	(105)	
		Vehicle Tracking (Verizon)		672	280	336	(36)	Costs to be incurred in Feb 2026
		All Star Network Service Charge		48	83	24	59	
		Road Tax (combined)		1,310	605	654	(49)	
	Subscriptions	General		1,900	687	950	(263)	
		AIFCA Annual Membership		14,343	14,342	14,343	(1)	
		Authority Meetings		2,500	917	1,250	(333)	
		COG		250	0	125	(125)	
		AIFCA Annual Forum		250	0	125	(125)	
	Meetings	NIMEG		250	153	125	28	
		TAG		250	395	125	270	
		Community Drop In Surgery		250	0	125	(125)	
	HR	Recruitment		3,000	4,139	1,500	2,639	Recruitment of Facilities & Administration Officer
		Legal Services		5,500	1,128	2,750	(1,623)	Less needed YTD than budgeted but these costs are not evenly spread across the year
	Staff Costs		Salaries and Other Labour Costs	721,757	381,103	365,678	1,425	Savings reflect 1 x IFCO sabbatical (4mo. Of FY), Office Manager & Srv IFCO resignations in year (other savings offset by NJC increases).
		Employment costs	LGA Pension Scheme	103,255	53,461	51,827	1,634	
			2025 NJC Pay Award	38,696	0	0	0	
			National MMO Trainer Contributions	4,980	0	4,980	(4,980)	Matter under discussion nationally between IFCA's and MMO - current MMO recruitment freeze
			National Torquay Course (C&E)	3,900	0	3,900	(3,900)	Costs to be incurred in Feb 2026
Capital Equipment	Training & other	National Torquay Course (Environment)		1,300	0	1,300	(1,300)	Costs to be incurred in Feb 2026
		Boarding & Pacing		1,720	0	1,720	(1,720)	Training 30 September, invoice dated 14 October, so will show in next BCS
		Mandatory C&E Certificates & Training		4,328	627	2,164	(1,137)	Training costs not evenly spread across the year
		Mandatory Training (non C&E)		4,600	626	2,300	(1,874)	No expenditure YTD
		Professional Development		3,200	500	1,600	(1,100)	No expenditure YTD
	Expenses	Wellbeing & Retention Initiatives		700	461	700	(239)	
		Officer Expenses (combined)		4,250	387	2,150	(1,753)	Expenditure has been relatively low this FY to date but this may change
		Chairman's Fund		1,000	289	600	(235)	
		Member Networking & Engagement		800	0	400	(400)	
		MMO appointee expenses		6,500	431	2,000	(1,569)	In 2024-25 FY, 67.5% of these expenses were submitted in March
	Members Expenses	Expenditure		1,129,589	543,153	674,953	(131,800)	
		Premises Depreciation		5,195	2,521	2,589	(27)	
		Equipment Depreciation		3,488	2,009	1,744	265	
		Vehicles Depreciation		8,856	4,168	4,428	(260)	
		FPVs Depreciation		110,096	39,910	55,048	(15,138)	Budget higher than has proved necessary due to budgeted for depreciation on Protector replacement
Business Services	Expenditure			127,638	48,712	63,818	(15,106)	
	Capital Equipment							
	Members Expenses							
	Capital Equipment							

Budget Forecast 2026-2027

Report by The CEO and the Accountant

A. Purpose

To provide Members with a Budget Forecast for the financial year 1st Apr 2026 to 31st March 2027.

B. Recommendations

1. That Members of the Authority approve the principles informing the Budget Forecast for the Financial Year 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2027.

C. Supporting Documentation for Further Information

Annex 1: Background to Budget Forecasting 2026-2027

Annex 2: Budget Forecast 2026-2027

1.0 Overview

This Executive Summary is accompanied by a contextual narrative (Annex 1) which provides an overview of the '**Budget Setting Components**' (key areas of work which Southern IFCA are required to deliver in the next financial year in accordance with statutory duties). Additionally, the paper describes **unknown variables** which have been considered when presenting the budget forecast, as well as detail on **cost savings** and finally the projected health of the **Authority Reserves** and their intended use during FY 2026-2027.

The Budget Forecast is designed to enable the delivery of the Authority's priorities in accordance with the IFCA's statutory functions, as detailed in Part 1 of Annex 1. **No new projects/works are proposed for the FY 2026-2027 – the budget presented considers costs associated with maintaining delivery of function only.**

Where possible the Budget Forecast is objective with estimations of income and expenditure mapped, based on past and current data information as well as projected economic conditions. Due to the nature of the work that Southern IFCA deliver, aspects of the budget must remain conservative due to a need to build in contingency for expenditures, for example when considering cost associated with 'Prosecution Costs' or 'FPV Maintenance Costs'.

2.0 Summary of Budget Forecast

Prior to inflationary projections, assuming a standstill (0%) in levy contributions, the budget forecast anticipates a loss of c.323k for the financial year 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2027.

The negative variance seen in the projected budget when compared with 2025-2026 FY reflects by majority, the **reduction in income of 140k of Defra funding money** and the decision to put on hold the sale of FPV Protector (£50k) - pending greater understanding of operational requirement and potential for external funding support via the 2026-2029 SR Bid. Additionally, no extra income associated with vehicle sales is anticipated for 26/27, following the successful reduction in vehicle fleet over the last couple of years from 5 to 3.

Savings in the Budget Forecast for 2026-2027

Savings in the budget forecast for 2026-2027 are seen across three of the four major budget headers for 2026-2027. Of note:

- a reduction in salaries and other labour costs reflects in part, the temporary hold position on a Senior IFCO post for 2026-2027, to allow for opportunities for internal professional development in house (c.32k).

- the decision to temporarily hold on procuring a replacement for FPV Protector has seen projected savings relating to depreciation costs of c.25k.
- greater budgeting accuracy (based on actuals rather than projections) for PFV Vigilant relating to maintenance and fuel costs following the vessel entering service in October 2024 (c.9.5k)

These **combined savings (c.66k)** have in part masked the impact that the reduction in Defra funding has had on the overall picture:

Major Headers: Expenditure	2025-2026	2026-2027	Variance	
Business Services	1,129,589	1,092,712	36,877	↓
Compliance & Enforcement	124,317	116,163	8,154	↓
Research & Policy	34,258	38,918	-4,660	↑
Capital Equipment	127,635	102,230	25,405	↓
Total Expenditure	1,415,799	1,350,023	65,776	↓

Total Income	1,211,658	1,026,648	185,010	↓
---------------------	------------------	------------------	----------------	---

Income over Expenditure	-204,141	-323,375		
--------------------------------	-----------------	-----------------	--	--

Reserve Adjustments

To meet the costs associated with day-to-day operations, and thus to meet Southern IFCA's statutory duties, the following reserve adjustments are proposed for the FY 2026-2027. **This recognises not only the extreme financial pressure that the Southern IFCA LAs are currently under but also anticipates a future position from Defra on potential changes to the IFCA funding model during the FY 2026-27.**

In total, to reduce the anticipated deficit, **it is proposed that c.277k of the deficit is met by the Southern IFCA reserves**, the majority of which is sourced from the remaining Defra funding pot.

Income over expenditure as above	-323,375
Adjustments	
Fisheries Act (Defra) Reserve	256,031
Research Reserve	4,960
Poole Order Reserve	14,866
Unspent ringfenced 2025-2026	2,030
Updated deficit for 26/27	-45,488

3.0 Final Position: Budget Forecast 2026-2027

Prior to inflationary projections, assuming a standstill (0%) in levy contributions, and following reserve adjustments, the budget forecast anticipates a loss of c.45k for the financial year 1st April 2026 to 31 March 2027.

4.0 Next Steps

Subject to approval of the Recommendation, the principles informing the budget forecast will be embellished to form the basis for the Southern IFCA Annual Strategy 2026-2027, for presentation to The Authority in March 2026.

Background to Budget Forecasting 2026-2027

Budget Setting Components

Part 1: Core Statutory Functions

1.1 Legislative Context

Marine and Coastal Access Act, Section 153(2)

- a. Seek to ensure that the exploitation of sea fisheries resources is carried out in a sustainable way.
- b. Seek to balance the social and economic benefits of exploiting the sea fisheries resources of the District with the need to protect the marine environment from, or promote its recovery from, the effects of such exploitation.
- c. Take any other steps which in the authority's opinion are necessary or expedient for the purpose of making a contribution to the achievement of sustainable development.
- d. Seek to balance the different needs of persons engaged in the exploitation of sea fisheries resources in the District.

Marine and Coastal Access Act, Section 154

Seek to ensure that the conservation objectives of any Marine Conservation Zones in the District are furthered.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, Regulation 63

Duties require Southern IFCA, as a defined competent authority, to make appropriate assessments of a plan or project which is likely to have a significant effect on a European Marine Site (EMS) (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects).

The Conservation Regs. 2019 transpose the land and marine aspects of the Habitats Directive⁶ (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) and the Wild Birds Directive⁷ (Directive 2009/147/EC) (known collectively as the Nature Directives) into UK statute. Under these Directives IFCAs must ensure that fishing activity does not damage, disturb or have an adverse effect on the wildlife or habitats for which a European Marine Site (EMS) is legally protected.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Sections 28g and 28i

Southern IFCA must consider any Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) with marine components, which are providing protection to species and/or habitat of national importance.

1.2 Primary Elements

The following outlines the primary elements that have informed the budget forecast for the forthcoming financial year, to ensure that Southern IFCA remain able to continue in the delivery of all statutory functions as specified under the Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009), The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 and The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

1.2.1 Research & Policy Functions

- To **collect data, undertake surveys** and carry out **stock assessments under the annual monitoring programme** in order to ensure that the best available evidence is used to inform both the development of, and review of, existing fisheries and conservation management interventions to ensure they are fit for purpose:
 - Poole Bivalve Survey
 - Solent Scallop Survey
 - Solent Bivalve Stock Assessment

- Solent Oyster Survey
- To continue with the delivery of **MPA management** in accordance with the Government's 2023 Environmental Improvement Programme (EIP); a revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan, seeking to support the Government's advance towards protections of 30% of the global ocean by 2030, realised domestically via enhancement of MPA protections. The following relevant work will require review during 2026-2027:
 - ***Anticipated NEW 2026-2027***
 - Annual review of Black Seabream Co-Developed Principles (Dorset MPAs) (*pending Authority ratification Nov 2025*)
 - Annual review of the Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Conditions
 - Annual review of the Solent Dredge Permit Conditions, Access Policy and Management Intentions Document
 - Annual review of the Net Fishing Permit Conditions.

1.2.2 Compliance & Enforcement Functions

- To deliver ongoing compliance and enforcement functions across **24x IFCA byelaws and 7x codes of practice in accordance with current metrics**, plus:
 - ***Anticipated NEW 2026-2027***
 - ensuring compliance with Black Seabream Co-Developed Principles (Dorset MPAs) (*pending Authority ratification Nov 2025*)
 - ensuring compliance with Shore Gathering Byelaw (pending Secretary of State ratification)
 - ensuring compliance with the Pot Fishing Byelaw (pending Secretary of State ratification)
- To deliver a **compliance and enforcement function** of all other relevant legislation to ensure the protection and enhancement of the fisheries and marine environment, supporting regulatory delivery partners to include the MMO where applicable.
- To deliver the above **requires ongoing costs** associated with 3 x fisheries protection vessels, 2 x drones, appropriate levels of staff training and provision of PPE to ensure that IFCA's remain safe in potentially hazardous work environments at sea and in port.
- To maintain the fiscal capacity to progress **prosecution of fisheries offences** in accordance with the Compliance & Enforcement Framework.
- To maintain capability with national compliance & enforcement systems such as CLUE.

1.2.3 Business Service Functions

- To **maintain core permanent staffing levels** in accordance with 2025/26 footprint (14x full time permanent, 2x part time permanent).
- To provide **pay increases to all employees** in accordance with the National Joint Council (NJC) Pay Award, as set out in employee contracts. A 4% provision has been set in the budget forecast, a figure consistent with NJC pay agreements received over the last few years. The annual pay awards equate, on average to salary increases of between c.3% and c.10%.
- To **maintain the office environment** ensuring appropriate maintenance, contracts and services are in place, to include addressing server end of life and broadband connection issues, as well as health & safety considerations.
- To ensure **adequate insurances** are in place across the business.
- To ensure **vehicle fleet management** for 3 operational vehicles.
- To ensure **ongoing scrutiny of public money** via appropriate governance channels, to include accountant services and external financial auditing costs.
- To **maintain annual subscriptions to the AIFCA recognising the essential role** it fulfils as an umbrella body to the 10 IFCA's in a national capacity.

- To meet the growing demands associated with the response to **GDPR requests** within recognised legislative timeframes.

Part Two: Additional Functions

2.1 Background

As part of the Government Spending Review 2021, Defra committed to a provision of funding (£150k per IFCA) for three financial years (2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-25). The funding provision was to enable IFCA's to support Defra in their delivery of Fisheries Act 2020 and Environment Act 2021 objectives, specifically Marine Protected Area (MPA), Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) and Marine Consents work. As part of the 2025-26 1 Year Spending Review, Defra committed to an additional year of funding (2025-26) for the above-mentioned purposes.

The Defra Reserve has been carefully managed by Southern IFCA since 2021 to ensure that a buffer has remained in place to honour the contracts of 2 x fixed term positions (MPA & FMP Project Officers) in addition to the cost contributions for 1x IFCO (undertaking Marine Consents work) and 2x Senior Managers across all three work areas. This, coupled with a delay in receipt of Defra funding in year one (2021-2022) enables **Southern IFCA to continue to draw from the Fisheries Act Reserve for an additional FY**. This will facilitate the necessary continuation of the work that Southern IFCA have achieved since receipt of the Defra funding in years 2021-22 (150k actual), 2022-23 (140k actual), 2023-24 (140k actual) & anticipated for receipt during 2025-2026 (50k actual, 90k pending).

2.2 Primary Elements

The following outlines the primary elements that will be delivered, **drawing from the Defra Reserve**, for the forthcoming financial year, to ensure that Southern IFCA are able during 2026-2027 to maintain delivery of work relevant to the Fisheries Act 2020 and the Environment Act 2021.

- To **maintain a Defra funded FMP Project Officer** role for 2026-2027 via extension of existing fixed term contract from January 2026 to March 2027, recognising costs associated with salary, pension, training and professional development.
- To **maintain provision** for the CEO & Deputy Chief Officers to continue to feed into the FMP programme.
- To **continue to explore REM & AI solutions in inshore fisheries**, building on project work which began in FY 2023-2024 and is due to finish in March 2026. This pilot project explored the use of REM and AI across three key fisheries in the District (BTFG, Pot & Net) with technologies installed on two vessels. A project extension will allow for data to be gathered and analysed across these three fisheries, as well as provision of ongoing maintenance and airtime costs for the two volunteer vessels during 2026-2027. In addition, Southern IFCA propose to instal REM technologies on 1 x PHDP vessel and 1 x Solent SCE vessel during 2026-2027 in order to provide more advanced understandings of the technology's application across bespoke fisheries within the District. The outcomes will jointly inform national discussions on MPA spatial management solutions, as well as FMPs in the inshore fleet, in addition to provision of information to support annual reviews of relevant Southern IFCA Permit Conditions.
- To **continue to address evidence gaps in relevant FMP tranche outputs**:
 - Via a continued extension of the **Solent Scallop Survey**, allowing for a mid-season survey in addition to a pre and post season survey, plus 2 additional days across all surveys.
 - Via a continuation of industry led **whelk sampling** across the District

- **NEW: Solent SCE Research Project 2026-2027**, focussed on gear trials, as agreed at the TAC in August 2025.

Part Three: Unknown Variables 2026-2027

3.1 Local Authority Levy Contributions

The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation (Amendment) Order 2019¹ states that the **expenses incurred by the Authority must be defrayed by the relevant councils.**

The 2026-2027 LA Levy contributions will be determined at the Meeting of the Full Authority on the 11th of December 2025.

3.2 Defra Spending Review Bid 2026/27-2028/29 Outcomes

On behalf of the 10 IFCA's, the AIFCA submitted, on the 8th of October 2025, a Spending Review (SR) bid for the period 2026/27 - 2028/29, recognising national inflation forecasts (proposing an increase from £3 million to £5.5 million for new burdens), as well as recognising the need for capital investment for replacement or refit of marine assets.

- The bid considered c.180-200k for FPV Protector replacement relevant to Southern IFCA, as well as more broader provisions across all IFCA's for drone and REM systems. If this bid is successful, the intention would be to release the equivalent amount to the General Reserve from that currently held (£120k) in the Marine Asset Reserve for this purpose.
- Specific to additional functions under the Fisheries Act and Environment Act, the bid included c.150k funding per IFCA across the three project areas outlined above.

The outcomes of this bid are not anticipated until Autumn 2026.

3.3 Rate of Inflation

The Office for Budgetary Responsibility predicts the UK's inflation rate to be an average of 2% in 2027. The rate of inflation has not been applied to the 2026-27 Budget Forecast.

Part Four: Funding Pots 2026-2027

4.1 Local Authority Levy Contributions

- The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation (Amendment) Order 2019² states that the **expenses incurred by the Authority must be defrayed by the relevant councils.**
- Dorset Council, Hampshire County Council, Isle of Wight Council and BCP Council receive a grant from central government (via the New Burdens Doctrine³) totalling £329,425.
- Table 1 maps the levy contributions received from the LAs since 2010. The LAs are levied in accordance with a prescribed formula (Table 2).
- The total LA levy contributions in 2025-2026 were £902,440. **This was a 6.72% increase on the previous year, representing a total monetary increase of 57k across all 6 LAs.**

¹ [The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation \(Amendment\) Order 2019 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2019/1000/contents/made)

² [The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation \(Amendment\) Order 2019 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2019/1000/contents/made)

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-burdens-doctrine-guidance-for-government-departments>

Table 1: Levy contributions received since 2010

Budget Year	Levy	% change	Budget Year	Levy	% change
2010 - 11	£729,292	0%	2018 - 19	£758,755	2%
2011 - 12	£729,292	0%	2019 - 20	£773,931	2%
2012 - 13	£729,292	0%	2020 - 21	£789,409	2%
2013 - 14	£729,292	0%	2021 - 22	£789,409	0%
2014 - 15	£729,292	0%	2022 - 23	£813,091	3%
2015 - 16	£729,292	0%	2023 - 24	£813,091	0%
2016 - 17	£729,292	0%	2024 - 25	£845,615	4%
2017 - 18	£743,878	2%	2025 - 26	£902,440	6.72%

Table 2: Formula & Levy Contributions 2025-2026

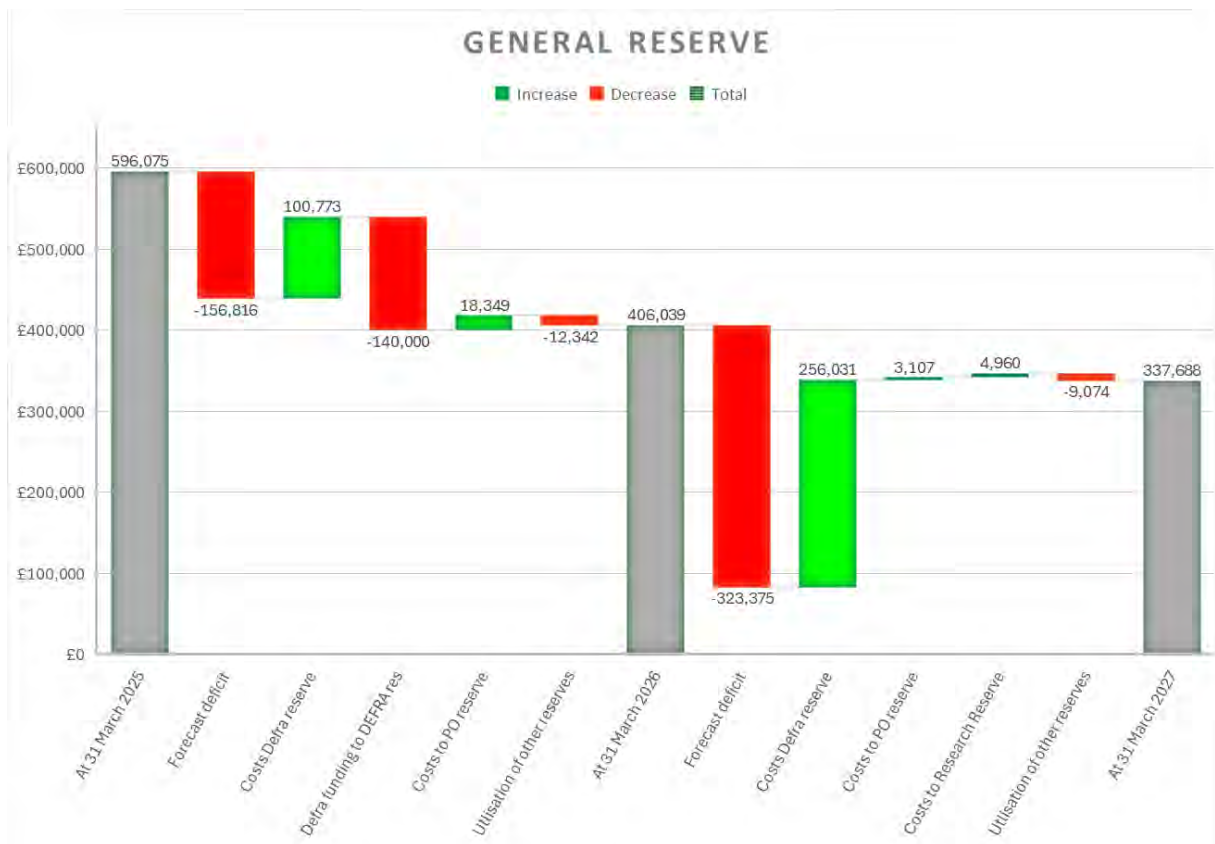
Constituent Council	Formula (%)	Levy 2025-2026 (£)
Hampshire County Council	40.40	£364,586
Dorset Council	24.79	£223,684
Isle of Wight Council	14.35	£129,499
BCP Council	11.14	£100,563
Portsmouth City Council	5.02	£45,302
Southampton City Council	4.30	£38,806
		£902,440

4.2 Southern IFCA Reserves

The following captures the health and function of Southern IFCA's Reserves, correct as of 30th September 2025, including projections for YE (March 2026) and the intended use of the reserves during 2026-2027 FY.

	2024/25 ACTUAL £k	2025/26 FORECAST £k	2026/27 BUDGET £k
General	596	406	338
Capital Finance	875	774	692
Marine Asset Renewal	419	519	601
Research	25	25	20
Compliance & Enforcement	0	4	0
Poole Order	54	35	33
Defra Fisheries Act	217	256	0
TOTAL	2,186	2,019	1,684

	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	FCAST	BUDGET
General Reserve	Mar 25	Sep 25	Mar 26	Mar 27
	596k	492k	406k	338k
Purpose: Accumulated excesses of income over expenditure. The only reserve not earmarked for a specific purpose. It represents resources that could be used at short notice in the event of unexpected events to provide an adequate balance of working capital to help cushion the impact of uneven cash flows and build up funds to meet known or predicted requirements. The reserve has been used to fund budget deficits in the past.				



Capital Finance Reserve	Mar 25	Sep 25	Mar 26	Mar 27
	875k	831k	774k	692k
Purpose: Equates to the net book value of the Authority's fixed assets register to provide a fund for the ongoing replacement of all of the Authority's capital assets (buildings, marine assets, vehicles and equipment).				

Marine Asset Renewal Reserve	Mar 25	Sep 25	Mar 26	Mar 27
	419k	462k	519k	601k
Purpose: To provide a fund for the replacement of marine assets where costs are anticipated to be in excess of net book value in addition to a holding pot for specified purposes:				
Projected Use of Reserve – in accordance with 10 Year Forecast 2023-2033 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace FPV Protector 2024-2025 – on hold (c.120k) Replace DJI Matrice Drone 2026-27 – on hold (c.20k) Replace FPV Endeavour 2028-2029 (c.70k) Replace FPV Vigilant 2030-2031 (c.350k) Holding pot: Unscheduled maintenance works (c.100k) Holding pot: Survey vessel (c.150k) 				
Projection of Reserve Movements 2026-27				
No movement projected during 2026/27 other than movements to reflect reduction in NBV of capital assets in year.				

Research Reserve	Mar 25	Sept 25	Mar 26	Mar 27
	25k	25k	25k	20k
Purpose: Created on 1 April 2020 to replace the Marine Act Reserve to fund ongoing work required by the MaCAA. The reserve is topped up by project income and also received unexpected income associated with the Poole Oil Spill in 2023.				
Projection of Reserve Movements 2026-27 Solent SCE Gear Trial Project (c.5k) as agreed by the TAC in August 2025.				

Compliance & Enforcement Reserve	Mar 25	Sep 25	Mar 26	Mar 27
	n/a	5k	4k	0k
Purpose: Created April 2025 by ESC to recognise the work that the C&E Officers are achieving nationally, which is drawing revenue to include chartering and provision of expertise on National Training courses. Initial sum 5k.				
Projection of Reserve Movements 2026-27 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income - 25-26 unforeseen income (£2,568 Sept 2025) Outgoing - Seaflux annual cost £2,652 				

Poole Order Reserve	Mar 25	Sep 25	Mar 26	Mar 27
	54k	46k	35k	33k
Purpose: The Authority manage aquaculture activity within a defined area of Poole Harbour under The Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 (1346/2015). Accordingly, the Authority is required to account for the relevant income and expenditure associated with its duties under this Order to include annual Management Reviews & biosecurity work, as well as work associated with the Tranche Reallocation Programmes (every five years c.105k).				
Projected Use of Reserve - 10 Year Forecast 2023-2033 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holding pot: Legal costs associated with ongoing management under the Poole Order (c.40k) Annual accumulation of annual lease holder fees to cover costs associated with Lease Bed Allocation Programme 2030-2035 (c.100k) 				
Projection of Reserve Movements 2026-27 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income: Reserve is replenished with lease holder fees annually (£33,459) Transfer to General Reserve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SAGB Conference & Membership and professional development (£1,375) Salary, pension & NJC contributions at 33% for IFCO undertaking Poole Order related work (c.13k) 2.5% of staff costs (£22k) 				

Fisheries Act (Defra) Reserve	Mar 25	Sep 25	Mar 26	Mar 27
	217k	166k	256k	0k
Purpose: As part of the Government Spending Review 2021, DEFRA committed to a provision of funding (£150k per IFCA) for three financial years (2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25).				
Projection of Reserve Movements 2026-27				

- 1 x FMP Project Officer contract extension 14 months (to March 2027) (to include salary & other labour costs & LGA Pension scheme contributions), 1x part funded IFCO delivering Marine Consents work, 1 x part funded IFCO delivering MPA work. (c.82k)
- FMP & MPA Related Projects: REM&AI (c.10k), Solent SCE Gear Trial Project (c.2k), Solent SCE survey (c.3k), WHK sampling (£600).
- To release 158k of remaining money in Reserve (subject to pending receipt of Defra funding (£90k outstanding for 2025-2026) in order to reduce the 2026-2027 anticipated budget deficit, recognising the relevant work, incorporated into everyday BAU since 2021 relevant to the funding workstreams.
- This reserve will cease to exist post March 2027, unless additional funding is received from Defra as part of the 2026-2029 SR outcomes.

Part Five: Budget Forecast

Prior to inflationary projections, the budget forecast anticipates a loss of **c.323k** for the financial year 1st April 2026 to 31 March 2027.

The negative variance seen in the projected budget when compared with 2025-2026 FY reflects by majority, **the reduction in income of 140k of Defra funding money** and the decision to put on hold the sale of FPV Protector (£50k) - pending greater understanding of operational requirement and potential for external funding support via the 2026-2029 SR Bid. Additionally, no extra income associated with vehicle sales is anticipated, following the successful reduction in vehicle fleet over the last couple of years from 5 to 3.

Savings in the budget forecast for 2026-2027 are seen across three of the four major budget headers for 2026-2027. Of note:

- a reduction in salaries and other labour costs reflects in part, the temporary hold position on a Senior IFCO post for 2026-2027, to allow for opportunities for internal professional development in house (c.32k).
- the decision to temporarily hold on procuring a replacement for FPV Protector has seen projected savings relating to depreciation costs of c.25k.
- greater budgeting accuracy (based on actuals rather than projections) for PFV Vigilant relating to maintenance and fuel costs following the vessel entering service in October 2024 (c.9.5k)

These **combined savings (c.66k)** have in part masked the impact that the reduction in Defra funding has had on the overall picture:

Major Headers: Expenditure	2025-2026	2026-2027	Variance	
Business Services	1,129,589	1,092,712	36,877	↓
Compliance & Enforcement	124,317	116,163	8,154	↓
Research & Policy	34,258	38,918	-4,660	↑
Capital Equipment	127,635	102,230	25,405	↓
Total Expenditure	1,415,799	1,350,023	65,776	↓
Total Income	1,211,658	1,026,648	185,010	↓
Income over Expenditure	-204,141	-323,375		

Reserve Adjustments

To meet the costs associated with day-to-day operations, and thus to meet Southern IFCA's statutory duties, the following reserve adjustments are proposed for the FY 2026-2027. **This recognises not only the extreme financial pressure that the Southern IFCA LAs are currently under but also anticipates a future position from Defra on changes to the IFCA funding model during the FY 2026-27.**

In total, to reduce the anticipated deficit, **it is proposed that c.277k of the deficit is met by the Southern IFCA reserves**, the majority of which is sourced from the remaining Defra funding pot.

Income over expenditure as above	-323,375
Adjustments	
Fisheries Act (Defra) Reserve	256,031
Research Reserve	4,960
Poole Order Reserve	14,866
Unspent ringfenced 2025-2026	2,030
Updated deficit for 26/27	-45,488

Prior to inflationary projections and following reserve adjustments, the budget forecast anticipates a loss of **c.45k** for the financial year 1st April 2026 to 31 March 2027.

		Apr 25-Mar 26		Budget Informers				Source										
Category		Nominal ledger		Budget (pre inflation)	April 2024- March 2025 (12 mo. actual)	April 2025- September 2025 (6 mo. actual)	New budget component	Budget Forecast Apr 26- March 27	Variance from previous budget	LA Levy	General Reserve	Defra Reserve	Research Reserve	C&E Reserve	Poolo Order Reserve	Notes		
Income	Local Authority Levy	Hampshire County Council				364,586		364,586	==									
		Dorset Council				223,684		223,684	==									
		iOW Council				129,499		129,499	==									
		BCP Council				100,563		100,563	==									
	Permits & Leases	Portsmouth City Council				45,302		45,302	==									
		Southampton City Council				38,806		38,806	==									
		Poole Harbour Dredge Permits				27,000		30,375	3,375 +									
		Solent Dredge Permits Category A				11,180		10,535	-645 -									
	Other	Poole Order Aquaculture Leases				32,803		33,459	656 +									
		Net Fishing Permit				1,870		1,870	==									
		Pot Fishing Permit: Commercial				3,600		3,600	==									
		Pot Fishing Permit: Recreational				1,050		1,050	==									
Outgoings: Compliance & Enforcement	Fisheries Protection Vessels	BCP Council Shellfish Sampling				3,765		3,765	==									
		Bank interest receivable				25,000		19,576	5,424 -									
		Unforeseen income (including chartering)				2,800	4,961	2,568	5,000	2,200 +								
		Defra Spending Review 2025-2026 (SR26 Part 1)				140,000		0	-140,000 -									
	Drones	Equipment Sell				58,550		3,303	-58,550 -									
		Court Costs Recovered				1,600		777	1,154 -									
						1,211,668			1,026,648	-185,010 -								
		Income:							1,026,648	-185,010 -								
	Outgoings: Business Services	Fuel	Combined				38,400		12,887	32,623	5,777 +							
			FPV Endeavour				2,400		1,172	2,244	-1,228 -							
			FPV Protector				12,000		1,637	3,274	-							
			FPV Vigilant				24,000	11,927	10,078	22,005	-							
Maintenance		Combined				15,000		12,668	3,988	11,193	3,807 +							
		FPV Endeavour						6,442	3,397	4,739	-							
		FPV Protector						2,026	900	2,026	-							
		FPV Vigilant						4,230	989	4,373	-							
Berthing		Combined				15,867			16,105	-238 -								
		FPV Endeavour							4,350	-								
		FPV Protector							1,155	-								
		FPV Vigilant							10,200	-								
Projects	Maintenance				3,000	2,530	854	1,708	1,292 +									
	REMAI Pilot Project Phase 1 - Installation: BTFG, Pot, Net fisheries				10,000		9,100		10,000	==								
	REMAI Pilot Project Phase 2 - Maintenance & Airtime							2,000	-2,000 -									
	REMAI Pilot Project Phase 3 - Installation: PHDP, Solent SCE							8,000	-8,000 -									
Training & Development	National: Torquay Course (C&E)				3,900			2,600	1,300 -									
	Mandatory Operational Certificates & Training				4,328	5,363	626	3,415	913 +									
	Boarding & Pacing				1,720		1,060	1,200	520 -									
	Accreditation (MMO)				800		800	80	-80 -									
Other	Powerboat UK Stage 1						1,976	988	-988 -									
	Marine Ops Training Pathway: Stage 2							2,030	-2,030 -									
	Advanced Professional Certificate in Investigative Practice							2,160	-2,160 -									
	Powerboat Revalidation							458	-458 -									
Outgoings: Research & Policy	Personal Protective Clothing	Operational Clothing				8,348	6,126	920	5,720	1,343 +								
		Enforcement Equipment				3,000		1,061	2,800	200 +								
		Industry Compliance Aids				1,800		609	1,800	0								
		Legal Services - Prosecutions				20,000			20,000	0								
	Monitoring Programs	Byelaws - Adverts				125,363			116,163	9,200	104,079	2,030	10,054					
		Legal Services - Byelaws				9,099	5,636		8,628	471 +								
		Community Engagement				2,000			2,000	0								
		Poolo Bivalve Survey				1,200		845	1,200	355 -								
	Training & Development	Solent Scallop Survey				960			960	0								
		Solent Bivalve Stock Assessment				4,320			5,760	-1,440 -								
		Whale Sampling				2,880			2,800	80								
		Whale Monitoring Programme Pilot CPUE				600			600	0								
Other	Oyster Survey (every 2 years)				500			0	500 +									
	NFB Drift Net Project				2,000			0	2,000 +									
	Survey Equipment and Maintenance				800		226	700	100 -									
	Solent SCE Research				2,000			0	2,000 +									
Outgoings: Capital Equipment	Office General	Financial Audit				3,890			3,890	0								
		Cleaning Materials & Supplies				249			498	-249 -								
		Voltage				155			310	-155 -								
		Insurance & Safety & CCPR				436			872	-436 -								
	Estate	Inventory				189			378	-189 -								
		Staff Uniforms (non PPE)				124			124	0								
		Unforeseen Estate Repairs & Maintenance				2,000			0	2,000 +								
		Equipment (c&e)				2,000			0	2,000 +								
	Contracts & Services	Office Milk, Tea, Coffee				274			500	-226 -								
		Contracts & Services				26,058		16,568	34,431	-8,373 -								
		Trout Waste Disposal					267		267	0								
		Repairs & Maintenance				1,094			1,094	0								
Finance	Communications				3,959			7,919	-3,960 -									
	Cleaning Contracts				750		2,489	4,975	-4,225 -									
	Leasing of equipment				558			1,116	-558 -									
	IT Services							558	-558 -									
Insurance	Office Rates				30,000		13,594	27,188	2,812 +									
	Energy							2,925	-2,925 -									
	Business Rates							16,836	-16,836 -									
	Financial Audit Costs (external)				3,600			4,650	-1,050 -									
Staff Costs	Karo Software				398		202	480	-84 -									
	Payroll				2,367			2,154	213 +									
	Bank charges				600		408	1,000	-400 +									
	General				11,324		14,087	14,791	-3,467 -									
Vehicle Fleet Management	Vehicles				4,234	4,234	5,165	4,423	-1,169 -									
	Marine Assets				22,457			24,640	-2,183 -									
	Vehicle Fuel				4,510	4,371	1,545	3,590	920 +									
	Maintenance							4,000	-328 -									
Subscriptions & Memberships	Roadside Assistance (combined)				105		263	263	-158 -									
	Vehicle Tracking (Verizon)				672			672	0									
	Road Tax (combined)				1,358	1,006	605	1,210	148 +									
	AIFCA Annual Membership				14,343	13,593	14,088	14,539	-198 -									
Meetings	Sheffield Association of GB				750		750	626	-126 -									
	Fisherman's Council				380	300		300	80									
	Solent Forum				576	120		120	456 +									
	MCSS				750		750	750	0									
Staff Costs	GLUE Intelligence System				8,152		6,443	1,709	-1,709 -									
	National: MMO/IFCD/Trainer Contributions				4,980		0	4,980	0									
	GIS Annual Licence				800		800	819	-19 -									
	Authority Meetings				2,500		1,025	2,500	0									
Members Expenses	COG				250		500	-250 -										
	AIFCA Annual Forum				250		250	250	0									
	NIMES				250		500	500	-250 -									
	TAG				250		500	500	-250 -									
Staff Costs	Community Drop In Surgeries				250		250	250	0									
	Recruitment																	

Proposed Levy Contributions 2026-2027

Report by The CEO

A. Purpose

To seek levy contributions from the six constituent Local Authorities in accordance with The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation (Amendment) Order 2019¹ which states that the expenses incurred by the Authority must be defrayed by the relevant councils.

B. Recommendations

1. That Elected Members² of the Authority approve that Southern IFCA's six constituent Local Authorities are levied for the financial year 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2027, at a rate of either:

a) **5.04%** - which equates to an increase of **c.45k**, split between the 6 x Local Authorities in accordance with a prescribed formula.

Constituent Council	+5.04%
Hampshire County Council	£18,377
Dorset Council	£11,275
Isle of Wight Council	£6,527
BCP Council	£5,069
Portsmouth City Council	£2,283
Southampton City Council	£1,956
	£45,487

b) **2%** - which equates to an increase of **c.18k**, split between the 6 x Local Authorities in accordance with a prescribed formula.

c) **0%** - which equates to a standstill on levy contributions.

1.0 Background

- Paragraph (16) of The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation (Amendment) Order 2019 states that the expenses incurred by Southern IFCA must be defrayed by the relevant councils.
- Dorset Council, Hampshire County Council, Isle of Wight Council and BCP Council receive a grant from central government (via the New Burdens Doctrine³) which totals £329,425.
- Table 1 maps the levy contributions received from the Local Authorities (LAs) since 2010.
- The constituent LAs are levied on an annual basis in accordance with a prescribed formula (Column B, Table 2).
- The total LA levy contributions in 2025-2026 were £902,440. **This was a 6.72% increase on the previous year, representing a total monetary increase of c.57k across all 6 LAs.** The corresponding monetary increases for 2025-2026 can be seen in Table 2.

¹ The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Order 2010 ([legislation.gov.uk](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)), The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation (Amendment) Order 2019 ([legislation.gov.uk](https://www.legislation.gov.uk))

² In accordance with Standing Order (77), the vote on the budgetary motion is to be undertaken by Elected Members only.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-burdens-doctrine-guidance-for-government-departments>

Table 1: Levy contributions received since 2010

Budget Year	Levy	% change	Budget Year	Levy	% change
2010 - 11	£729,292	0%	2018 - 19	£758,755	2%
2011 - 12	£729,292	0%	2019 - 20	£773,931	2%
2012 - 13	£729,292	0%	2020 - 21	£789,409	2%
2013 - 14	£729,292	0%	2021 - 22	£789,409	0%
2014 - 15	£729,292	0%	2022 - 23	£813,091	3%
2015 - 16	£729,292	0%	2023 - 24	£813,091	0%
2016 - 17	£729,292	0%	2024 - 25	£845,615	4%
2017 - 18	£743,878	2%	2025 - 26	£902,440	6.72%

Table 2: Formula & Levy Increases & Contributions 2025-2026

Constituent Council	Formula (%)	Levy ↑ 25-26	25-26 Total Contributions
Hampshire County Council	40.40	£22,957	£364,586
Dorset Council	24.79	£14,085	£223,684
Isle of Wight Council	14.35	£8,154	£129,499
BCP Council	11.14	£6,332	£100,563
Portsmouth City Council	5.02	£2,852	£45,302
Southampton City Council	4.30	£2,444	£38,806
			£902,440

2.0 Summary of Key Points

- Prior to inflationary projections, the budget forecast for the financial year 1st April 2026 to 31 March 2027 anticipates a loss of **c.323k**.
- To reduce the anticipated deficit, **it is proposed that c.277k of the deficit is met by the Southern IFCA reserves**, the majority of which is sourced from the remaining Defra Reserve.

Prior to inflationary projections and following reserve adjustments, the budget forecast anticipates a loss of **c.45k** for the financial year 1st April 2026 to 31 March 2027.

- Southern IFCA are **seeking a 5.04% uplift in levy contributions** from the LAs (collectively in accordance with the prescribed formula) to ensure that Southern IFCA can continue to deliver its statutory duties on behalf of the Local Authorities for the financial year 2026-2027.
- A **2% increase** covers the anticipated rate of inflation only.

Table 3: Proposed Monetary Increases for 2026-2027

Constituent Council	+5.04%	+2%
Hampshire County Council	£18,377	7,292
Dorset Council	£11,275	4,474
Isle of Wight Council	£6,527	2,590
BCP Council	£5,069	2,011
Portsmouth City Council	£2,283	906
Southampton City Council	£1,956	776
	£45,487	£18,049

3.0 Delivering Value for Money

- Elected Members are invited to consider the [Southern IFCA Annual Report 2024-2025](#) which provides extensive information on the work that Southern IFCA achieve within the remit of their constituent councils.
- To supplement the Annual Report, a new initiative was introduced in September 2025 which provides **specific information relevant to the work that Southern IFCA have delivered in each of our constituent LA areas** over the relevant reporting period. Further information can be found [here](#).
- Southern IFCA remain exceptionally grateful to our LAs for their continued financial

contributions which enable us to continue our important work protecting inshore fisheries and conservation objectives.

4.0 Options to address the forecasted 2026-2027 budget overspend

➡ To seek an increase the Levy contributions

- Whilst Southern IFCA recognise the extreme financial pressures that our constituent LAs are under, considering the wider fiscal climate, competent management of Southern IFCA's finances over several years shouldn't negate consideration of an increase in LA levy contributions.
- This competent management has allowed **86% of the projected deficit to be reduced via a transfer of c.277k from the Southern IFCA Reserves (mainly due to prudent management of the DEFRA reserve).**
- Seeking an increase in levy contributions is an approach consistent with all the other IFCA's, specifically for 2026-2027 these increases are: 12% agreed (Eastern), 7% proposed (Devon & Severn), 4.4% proposed (Northwestern), 3.5% proposed (AIFCA), 3% proposed (Northumberland & Northeastern), *[unknowns at time of writing: Kent & Essex, Cornwall, IOS, Sussex]*

➡ To utilise the Southern IFCA General Reserve

- To rely on the General Reserve to balance the budget in the short term, recognising the long-term impact this may have on operational delivery. Overtime this could lead to a reduction in operational capacity across the District via a reduction in sea & land patrols, and/or a reduction in staff footprint via a recruitment freeze, which will place undue pressure on a team already working at capacity.
- To note – the prudential indicator for the General Reserve, as set in The Reserves Policy is 15% of annual gross expenditure⁴. This prudential indicator is a useful control measure and is a rudimentary way of assessing the adequacy of the General Reserves. For 2026/27, this indicator is as follows:

	2024/25 ACTUAL £k	2025/26 FORECAST £k	2026/27 BUDGET £k
Annual gross expenditure	1,150	1,325	1,350
General reserve	440	250	182
Prudential indicator	38%	19%	13%

As can be seen from the above analysis, the reduction in Defra funding along with other cost pressures means that despite saving £66k of costs in the 2026/27 budget, the indicator falls below our target of 15% in 2026/27.

5.0 Next Steps

Southern IFCA's six constituent LAs will be levied at the agreed rate no later than the 14th of February 2026, in accordance with appropriate legislations.

⁴ *In accordance with Section 3.1.3 of the Reserves Policy, the Prudential Indicator is set for the General Reserve at c.15% of annual gross expenditure (NB – General Reserves less that earmarked for specific purposes. Per 2022/23 accounts the indicator would be calculated as follows:

General reserves £1,006k
Less earmarked for specific purposes £875k (*note 1)
Remaining general reserve £131k
Gross expenditure £814k
% 16%

note 1 – earmarked reserves include DEFRA revenue and capital reserves (£395k), Dilapidations and training (£30k) and amounts to be transferred to the Marine Asset Renewal Reserve (£450k)

Compliance & Enforcement Report Paper For Information

Report by Principal Deputy Chief Officer Sam Dell

A. Purpose

To provide Members with an overview of the Southern IFCA risk-based based approach to compliance and enforcement (C&E) for the period August to October 2025.

B. Supporting Information

Further details of the C&E functions, to include the 2025-2026 Compliance & Enforcement Team Plan can be found here: [Compliance & Enforcement : Southern IFCA \(southern-ifca.gov.uk\)](https://southern-ifca.gov.uk).

1.0 Background

The statistical data presented is aligned to national IFCA metrics that are reported to the AIFCA and Defra on an annual basis, in addition to provision of district specific metrics which capture how the CETs work is working to deliver the [Southern IFCA Annual Strategy 2025-2026](#).

2.0 Overview of key active fisheries during reporting period

The key active fisheries for this period have been the **Poole Harbour Dredge fishery** for clams and cockles which opened on the 25th May, 45 permits are issued each year, all vessels in the fishery are less than 9m in length and are small open vessels which carry out day fishing trips during periods of high water, officers have been **ensuring compliance** with the associated permit conditions focussing on compliance with temporal and **spatial restrictions**.

Another key fishery within the district is the **Bass** fishery, **commercial vessels** may fish for, retain and land bass with authorised fishing gear within the specified limits. **Recreational fishers** using rod and line may retain two bass per person, per day.

As expected at this time of year the team observe **an increase in Recreational Sea Angling and Shellfish Gathering** across the district. The Southern IFCA District is a nationally significant area for recreational sea angling, Recreational Sea Angling is one of the country's most popular sports, with up to 2 million people partaking every year. Anglers use rod and line to target a wide variety of fish species, with popular catches including Bass and Black Seabream. CET focuses on communication and engagement to raise awareness of the regulations, with a key focus on Bass compliance.

The CET continue to enforce the **Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw** which protects features of MPAs across the district and the **Minimum Conservation Reference Size (MCRS) Byelaw** across all fisheries.

3.0 Intelligence Reporting

The majority of Intelligence Reports submitted in the reporting quarter relate to the **Poole Harbour Dredge Fishery and dredging in closed areas and retention of undersize**, other key themes identified are **illegal hand gathering activity** across the district.

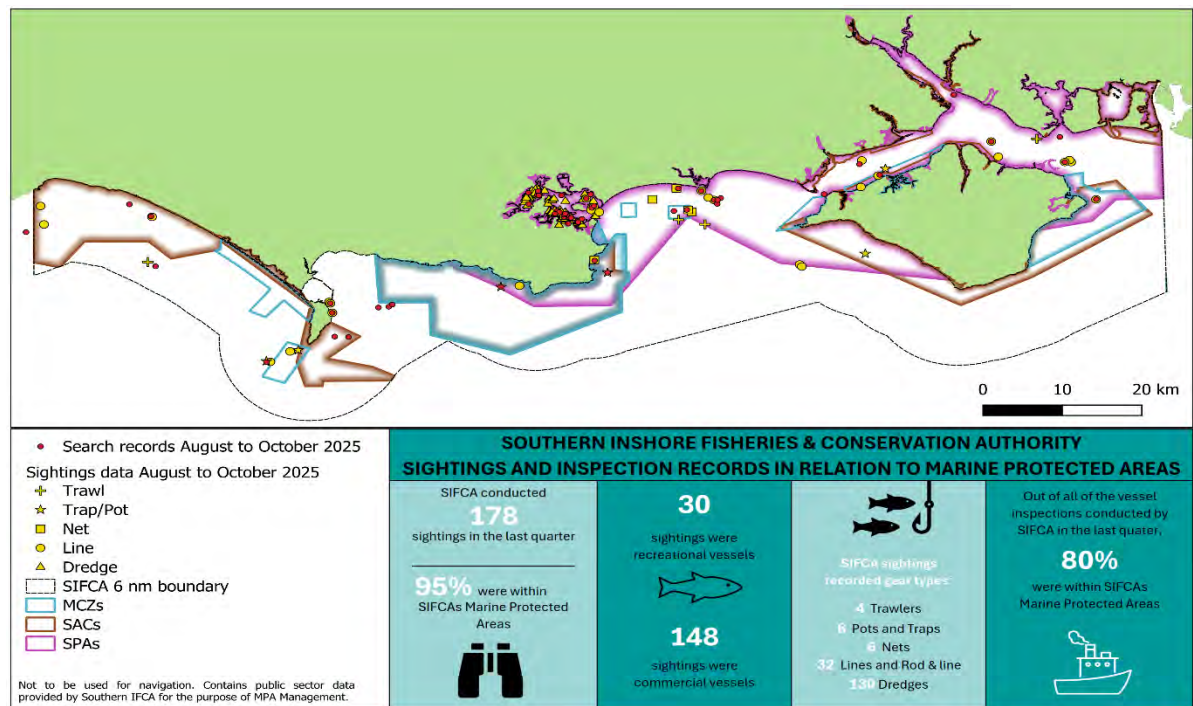
August	September	October	Total
22	15	18	55

4.0 Compliance Patrols

Category	Metric	August	September	October	Total
Inspections at sea	Vessel patrols	9	5	5	19
	Boardings/inspections	29	11	22	62

Inspections ashore or in a port	Shore patrols	11	8	13	19
	Port visits	15	13	13	49
	Premises inspections	1	0	3	4
	Landing inspections	1	5	10	16
	Vehicle inspections	3	0	3	6
	Gear inspections	0	0	1	1
	Person inspection	9	1	0	10

5.0 Sightings & Inspections relating to MPAs



6.0 Enforcement Actions Arising

The following tables demonstrate the **offence reports submitted by officers for which cases have been generated**, these predominantly relate to breaches of MCRS in the **Poole Harbour Dredge fishery** as well as **breaches of the Bass regulations**.

Offences Detected	August	September	October	Total
Verbal Warnings	4	0	1	5
Written Warnings	0	0	2	2
Advisory Letter	0	0	0	0
FAP	0	0	0	0
Offence Reports	1	2	3	6

Date of Offence	Offence	Action
19/08/2025	Breach of PHDP closed area (Green Island)	Investigation on-going
16/09/2025	Breach Net Fishing Byelaw, Bass Nursery Area, IUU (Illegal Unlicensed Unregistered)	Investigation on-going (Joint MMO)
30/09/2025	Storage of undersize Clams (premises)	Investigation on-going (Joint MMO)
08/10/2025	Breach recreational Bass limit	Investigation on-going
23/10/2025	Storage of undersize Clams (transport & vessel)	OWLs (x2) issued.
31/10/2025	Breach Bass Nursery Area	Investigation on-going

The following table demonstrates the **offence outcome for this reporting quarter**:

Date of Offence	Offence	Action taken and date
23/07/2025	Retention undersize Cockles	OWLS (x2) issued 01/08/2025. Case closed.

7.0 **Next Steps**

That Members receive the report.

Behind the Scenes Paper For Information

Report by the RPT, CET and BST

A. Purpose

To provide Members with an update on aspects of work that the Research and Policy Team (RPT), Compliance and Enforcement Team (CET) and Business Services Team (BST) is delivering behind the scenes.

1.0 Introduction

- This report from the staff across the three teams in the IFCA, RPT, CET and BST captures aspects of work being delivered behind the scenes. This may include standalone projects or supplementary work which complements and supports the Annual Plan and RPT & CET Plans.

2.0 Summary of Key Points

- Reports from the RPT:
 - This quarter the RPT have been working on the delivery of autumn surveys under the Southern IFCA Monitoring Programme, primarily in the Solent, but also in the delivery of the first mid-season Pilot survey programme to support the Poole Harbour Dredge Permit fishery. Results from survey work in the Solent has been used to identify and support a review to explore and implement additional management interventions in the Solent Scallop Fishery under the Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw, and the Juvenile Fish Survey autumn surveys have provided opportunities for public engagement. The RPT have been engaging across the District, attending the Dorset Coast Forum Conference, meetings for local projects such as the Solent Seascapes Project and in delivering a lecture to Bournemouth University on the work of Southern IFCA. IFCOs new to the role have also been developing their C&E skills through practical and theoretical learning and our PO for FMPs has been working to standardise Southern IFCA datasets to allow metadata to be more readily accessible by a wider audience.
- Reports from the CET:
 - The CET have been busy this quarter dealing with ongoing investigations, identifying an increased quantity and complexity in the relevant case files. Officers have been working to pursue all reasonable lines of inquiry including scrutiny of CCTV evidence, iVMS, drone footage, catch return & landings data, and patrol data. Work has also been ongoing to delivery boarding and pacing training to all Officers which provided a great opportunity for training in a high-risk element of the IFCO role and for building and strengthening the teams' cohesiveness and operation as a team. Officers have been employing land, sea and drone based patrols to address two high priority fisheries during one of the busiest times of the year when the Solent Dredge Permit Fishery and Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Fishery overlap, including engaging with industry on new measures for the Solent Scallop Fishery and new bottom towed fishing gear (BTFG) closed areas under the BTFG Byelaw 2023, where novel approaches are being developed to aid fishers in getting relevant closed areas into vessel plotters. Officers have continued with their own personal development through the Learning Management System and there has been a focus on engagement within the recreational angling sector, providing education and awareness on regulations.

- Reports from the BST:
 - The BST have been working to ensure the smooth administration of the Office, including building maintenance and fire regulations and engaging with stakeholders as a first point of contact for Office phone calls and emails. Work has been undertaken on management of the vessel and vehicle fleet across both maintenance and financial aspects, and cost savings are being explored for goods or services sought from external suppliers for all office functions. Across the BST permits for the Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw 2025-26 season were facilitated, with payments recorded and the application process delivered to ensure that all applications were processed, and fishers were permitted before the start of the season. Work has also been ongoing in transferring the Fish for Sale Permits to the Online Permitting System with just over 85% of permitted vessels now on the online platform.

3.0 Next Steps

- That Members receive the report.

Behind the Scenes with the RPT

with IFCO Churchouse



The Autumn Solent survey period was dominated by analysis of the Solent Scallop fishery, which was surveyed in mid-September. While the survey was successfully completed in two days, running the new methodology, analysis of the results raised a number of Red Flags in relation to the CPUE for King scallop. Review of these results amongst officers led to discussions with Members of the TAC about the need for a review & associated consultation on additional management for the Solent Scallop fishery, which was run in mid-October. This period of consultation overlapped with planned Solent Community Forum events in Warsash and Portsmouth, which I attended along with other officers.



Figure 1: Officers undertaking sampling on the Autumn 2025 Solent Scallop Survey.



Figure 2: A selection of scallops of increasing sized sampled on the Autumn 2025 Solent Scallop Survey.

Results from both the Solent Scallop and the Solent Bivalve survey were presented to stakeholders, and the proposed reviewed permit conditions presented, with time allotted for stakeholders to discuss the options that would work for them. I found these meetings incredibly informative for highlighting what aspects of the fishery work best for the stakeholders, and which changes were likely to have the largest impact on them.

Following the agreed altered 2025/26 season permit conditions, the condition of scallop stocks will continue to be monitored through the data submitted on SDPB catch returns to support best available evidence used to inform management.



with IFCO C. Mullen

On the 19th November 2025, Southern IFCA had the opportunity to attend the 30-year anniversary conference of the Dorset Coast Forum which showcased accomplishments across research projects, coastal planning & management and local initiatives throughout the Dorset coastline.



The event brought together a wide network of organisations, charities, academics, local councils, governing bodies and fisher representatives. It offered a great opportunity to share updates on ongoing research and projects, reconnect with key engagement groups with which Southern IFCA is involved and celebrate collaborative efforts across the region.



Tommy Russell, representing Poole and District Fishermen's Association at the Dorset Coast Forum 2025.

Key discussions covered the challenges of adapting to warmer seas in the sea west from a research perspective and innovative responses emerging from fishers across the region. Rob Clark represented the Association of IFCAs to deliver an engaging talk highlighting the importance of small-boat fishing communities through the Securing Sustainable Inshore Fisheries in the UK report, referencing key fisheries within Dorset, including the history of and evolution of fishing within Poole Harbour and Lyme Bay. Tommy Russell, representing the Poole and District Fishermen's Association, complemented this through sharing his perspective as a local fisher and his identity within the fishing community.

Other talks surrounded utilising blue spaces in Dorset, including improving accessibility to beach fronts for those unable to currently reach the water's edge, showcasing the arts in local towns and increasing job prospects for the future under the renewable energy sector.

The forum offered an inspiring look into the range of forward-thinking work shaping the future of the Dorset coast and provided an excellent opportunity for reflection, education and connection to the ocean.



As an Officer on the Research & Policy team, my role includes attending and supporting engagement, and leading the annual Juvenile Fish Survey.

One of the frequent engagement groups that I attend, the Solent Seascape Project working group, has released an online data portal that includes data from multiple organisations within the Solent. This includes the Southern IFCA byelaws relevant to that area. With the latest release of the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear 2023 Byelaw, I am working with ABPmer to update the Data Explorer with a shape file and metadata of the BTFG 2023 prohibition areas.

Another point of engagement was presenting a fisheries lecture with IFCO Mullen to the environmental science students at Bournemouth University. The lecture lasted an hour with questions asked throughout the presentation. The students seemed engaged and enjoyed learning about Southern IFCA, its duties, and the local fisheries we manage (Case Study: Poole Harbour). Engagement with Universities is important as the students gain an insight into potential future career



Top: a slide from the presentation delivered to students of Bournemouth University.

Bottom: deploying the net at Christchurch (left), and measuring a juvenile wrasse sampled at the Fleet (right).

careers in the marine sector. We also have a link to Bournemouth since we use their labs to analyse the Whelk samples from our Whelk stock assessment.

As the lead officer for the juvenile fish surveys, I organised the Autumn surveys. These surveys are a great opportunity for public engagement, especially since the Autumn survey at Christchurch coincided with a Halloween trail. We had lots of young families asking questions about Southern IFCA, the survey and the fish.



with IFCO Meredith-Davies

Last September, I transitioned from a Project Officer role to an IFCO role that has seen me take a more active and practical role in compliance and enforcement across the district. I completed Boarding and Pacing training in Southampton Water where I practiced vessel boarding and sea rescue (man overboard). I've also been familiarizing myself with key enforcement legislation and the byelaws across the district.

Throughout this quarter I have used this knowledge to assist warranted CET colleagues in shore patrols across the district. I've carried out landing inspections of various fish and shellfish. I've also helped carry out drone patrols and operated the drone's camera gimble to monitor closed areas.

Through these patrols, I've engaged with fishers, anglers, processors and restaurant owners, raising public awareness of our management measures and broadening my understanding of our district's coastal community and SIFCAs role in it.

Notably this extended beyond meeting stakeholders during patrols. This November I attended a meeting the Poole and District Sea Angling Association (PDSAA).

This meeting introduced me to members of major angling clubs and key stakeholders for recreational sea angling across the district. Our discussions highlighted key issues faced by anglers, providing me insight into the role RSA plays in our wider marine community.

I provided an update on key byelaws including how Southbourne Rough is now closed to bottom towed fishing gear, and the draft co-development principles consulted on for black seabream management.



Living native oyster found growing on living Pacific Oyster during the Solent bivalve survey

Additionally, I've taken part in the Solent Bivalve Survey, identifying and measuring various bivalves across multiple Solent sites to monitor clam and cockle stock health. I've also participated in SIFCAs annual small fish surveys where colleagues and I donned dry suits to sample, identify, and measure coastal fish using a Seine net method.



with PO Wright

Medin Webinar Series. Over the last few months, I've been attending online webinars run by Medin. So far I've attended four. That have covered a variety of topics from navigating marine data to data standards and how to make the most of data that already exists.

I have been doing a lot of work with data at SIFCA since I joined. Taking various courses through Medin has helped with that. As I work on getting our databases to data standards so that our meta data can be published, allowing people to know the data that we hold at SIFCA.

While very interesting it has at times made my brain hurt, as I try to absorb all this new information. Once I've absorbed all this information I am looking forward to implementing this new knowledge into the data sets that I've been compiling for SIFCA. This is something I'm continuing to work on.



This is long term project, with six ongoing research projects with data going back a decade in some cases. With tens of thousands of samples, within a survey. I had no idea just how many manila clams, whelks and silver smelt (along with a very long list of other species) had been measured or weighed.

So I am continuing to work on this and eventually I will be up to date with all the surveys and only have to update the Medin specific spreadsheets each time a survey happens instead of going into the archive. The data will be helpful for the FMP process as well as implementation processes progress.

Behind the Scenes with the CET

With Senior IFCO Parry

BEHIND THE SCENES

Over the last few months, I have been busy across several workstreams, including complex investigations that required detailed evidence gathering. I have also maintained my operational currency through our UAV (drone) programme and assisted in delivering the boarding and pacing training.

Our UAV has been deployed on several occasions to support and strengthen our monitoring and control effort. The Compliance and Enforcement Team have conducted multiple flights targeting Marine Protected Areas to ensure compliance with current legislation. This has included night-time flights, which present additional challenges due to increased risk and the requirement for heightened situational awareness from both the pilot and the observer.

As the lead drone pilot, it is essential that I stay informed of any changes—whether legislative or operational—that may impact our drone operations.



In September, we delivered the boarding and pacing training using FPVs Vigilant and Protector, with the research vessel Callista acting as the target vessel. The purpose of the exercise was to demonstrate and highlight the risks inherent in what is undoubtedly one of the most dangerous aspects of an IFCO's role.

As one of the vessel skippers, my responsibility was to demonstrate how to pace a vessel and then bring the patrol vessel safely alongside the target to enable a controlled boarding. The officers learned about the risks involved, how to mitigate them, and how to assess whether a boarding can be conducted safely. It was an excellent day, not only from a training perspective but also for building and strengthening teams' cohesiveness and ability to operate effectively as a team.

BEHIND THE SCENES

It's been an extremely busy period in terms of investigations. The Southern IFCA has three cases which are progressing to magistrates' court for offences committed within the Authority's District during 2025, and a trial is listed for the 23rd of April 2026 at Poole Magistrates Court, for an offence committed in August of 2024.

In addition, we've just issued a £1000 Fixed Administrative Penalty Notice (FAP) to two fishers for a breach of the IFCA's Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Byelaw and an Official Warning Letter to two fishers for a breach of the IFCA's Minimum Conservation Reference Size Byelaw. Five other investigations are ongoing.

Whilst the quantity of work this year has been challenging, so too has been the complexity. As warranted Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Officers we are duty bound to follow all reasonable lines of inquiry when performing our enforcement functions, regardless of whether those inquiries point towards or away from a suspect. In some cases, these inquiries involve scrutiny of CCTV evidence, analysis of Inshore Vessel Monitoring System, drone footage, fisher catch returns, landings data, witness testimony, suspect testimony, patrol logs etc. etc. In the most complex cases we are looking at all these elements and more. The work may involve creating schedules and maps to depict a vessel's course, speed and location over a period. It often involves liaising with other enforcement agencies and sharing information under the Data Protection Act 2018 for the prevention and detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders. Any case that Southern IFCA takes to court will be presented using the nationally standardized suite of MG (Manual of Guidance) forms; also used by Police, the CPS and other law enforcement agencies. Complex cases often generate a large amount of material. This can be material that helps to illustrate a suspect's participation in an offence, their non-involvement, or just general information accumulated during an investigation. Whilst Southern IFCA will always use any incriminating material to form the main part of a prosecution case, under law (The Criminal Procedure & Investigations Act 1996 Code of Practice) it must also retain all other relevant material and disclose any non-sensitive material which might reasonably undermine the prosecution's case or assist the defence.

The Southern IFCA's decision regarding a suitable choice of enforcement sanction is always taken after a review of all available material, which is assessed against the pertinent evidential and public interest criteria, in line with the Southern IFCA's Compliance & Enforcement Framework and The Code for Crown Prosecutors. But it's worth mentioning that there have been many high-profile miscarriages of justice reported over the years, when prosecuting authorities have failed to adhere to the rules of disclosure. And whilst the storage, logging, review and disclosure of all material in a case can be onerous, it is a very necessary task, which ensures that justice is done and that the public have confidence in the Criminal Justice System.



BEHIND THE SCENES

The Solent Dredge Permit (SDP) fishery opened on the 1st November, which marks the start of the busiest time of year for the CET, both the Solent and Poole Dredge fisheries being active at once. The PHDP clam & cockle fishery remains open until 24th December. With 49 vessels entering the SDP fishery this year, coupled with 45 permitted vessels in Poole, our main patrol work is to ensure that every vessel is compliant with national legislation and SIFCA byelaws.

Over the past three months we have been aboard FPV Endeavour in Poole Harbour, conducting boardings of PHDP vessels to check for MCRS compliance. Back on shore, we've conducted 16 port visits, to not only carry out landing inspections but too also engage with fishers, answer their questions and gather intelligence. These conversations often provide valuable insights into challenges they may face and allow us to gather views on the management of the fishery.

We have conducted 19 drone flights in the past few months, allowing us to monitor closed areas such as Green Island, Seagull Islands and the newly updated BTFG 2023 closures. The drone gives us a bird's-eye view of activity, helping us detect infringements quickly and gather valuable evidence. The drone has also been used to cover the curfew, ensuring that fishing activity remains within permitted areas.

Since the opening of the Scallop & Clam season in the Solent, we have been present at sea on FPV Vigilant and at ports e.g. Camber Docks. So far, we have conducted 21 inspections of SDP vessels, checking for compliance with MCRS. BTFG closed areas, especially Calshot & Osbourne Bay, where infringements are most likely based on previous years, have been closely monitored using both drone and vessels.



Engagement with skippers has been a priority. We've worked to ensure that all permit holders understand the change in curfew and the new BTFG 2023 byelaw. IFCO Payton has worked on inputting BTFG areas into the skippers' plotters to prevent non-compliance. Along with fishers, this season it was decided to reduce fishing effort to 6 hours per day rather than 8. Aboard Vigilant we have covered the curfew, and so far, there has been compliance.

The season is far from over, and our patrols on sea, land and skies will continue to ensure compliance in our dredge fisheries!



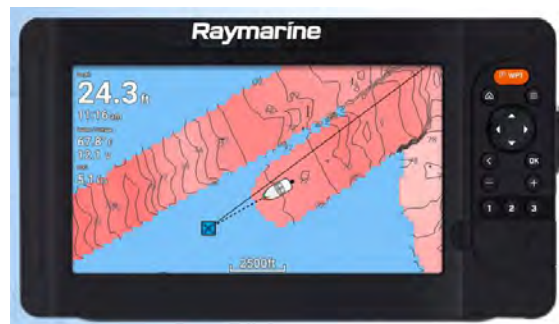


With IFCO Payton

Recently I have been continuing working with the industry in getting vessel plotters to show all of the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 closed areas. With the recent opening of the Solent Dredge Permit Fishery there has been an increase in demand by the industry for their plotters to show all of the closed areas.

I have successfully imported the closed areas onto some fishing vessels with ease and others I have been back and forth between trying to work out a solution. The main challenge has come from older plotters which many masters of the vessels assure me are very reliable. However, means they are not compatible with my current means of getting the areas onto the plotter. Fortunately, we should shortly be in possession of an adapter which will allow us to access these older plotters and hopefully upload the closed areas.

It has been good to see such a positive response from the industry with them being keen to have the areas put on their plotters and how grateful they are when it is done. Hopefully, this will reflect with an increase of voluntary compliance with the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023.



An older plotter (left) Vs a newer plotter (right) with the associated card required to access each (Compact Flashdrive Vs Micro SD card).





with IFCO Checketts

This quarter has been largely focused on case file work and ongoing investigations. Alongside this, the Solent Dredge Permit Fishery opened on 1st November, which significantly increases the workload, for the Compliance Team. This opening marks the start of an increased patrol period within the Solent to ensure vessels are operating in line with permit conditions.

A major priority this season has been addressing the findings of the 2025 Solent Scallop Survey. Of which the data showed that scallop stocks have not recovered to a satisfactory level, so further management measures were necessary to support a sustainable fishery. One of these measures was a reduction in permitted fishing hours to limit them from 08:00 hrs to 1400hrs to reduce pressure on stocks.

We have also placed a strong emphasis on ensuring fishers comply with the minimum conservation reference size for Scallop which in 7d is 110 mm. This involves undertaking boardings at sea to conduct inspections to ensure compliance, after every inspection whether commercial or recreational, at sea or on land IFCOs complete an SF1 form. This provides a formal record of the inspection and ensures the fisher receives a copy.

One of my ongoing responsibilities is inputting all inspection records into our internal inspections database. This system allows us to track previous inspections, identify any past offences, and determine whether follow-up action is needed. Over the past quarter, I have also been improving the database's search capabilities by standardising how names and addresses are recorded. This will make it much easier to locate individuals and cross-reference known persons accurately.

In addition to operational duties, I have continued progressing through my Level 3 Certificate in Fisheries and Marine Enforcement via the online Learning Management System. Completing this qualification is an important step toward achieving warranted status and expanding my capability within the team.



with IFCO Bedwell

In recent months, I have been out on patrols engaging with the recreational sea anglers. As the cold weather draws in, recreational sea angling activity has started to reduce out on the water, however, there are still some braving the cold. When out on patrol, I have been speaking to people about our minimum conservation reference sizes for fish and shellfish, handing out resources where needed and enforcing the recreational restrictions on Bass.

At the beginning of the month, I spoke to a vessel who were live streaming on a social media outlet called Tik Tok. While alongside, we spoke to them about the rules and regulations surrounding their hobby with the hope of educating both them and their viewers. We also gave them some measuring stickers to make sure they adhere our minimum sizes. With many people using Tik Tok being younger people, I hope that seeing what fisheries officers do and hearing about our regulations will influence the next generation of recreational fishers, educate those already fishing and improve everyone's knowledge

of our marine environment and the regulations in place to protect it.



I have also been out around Christchurch Ledges, another hotspot for recreational anglers. I have carried out inspections and engaged and educated where needed to make sure all vessels seen were compliant with our regulations. With over 30 recreational vessel sightings in the last quarter, we have focused a fair proportion of our patrols on the recreational sector.

Behind the Scenes with the BST



*with Facilities & Administration
Officer, June Furlonger*

As the Facilities and Office Administrative Officer working in the business services team (BST), I look after the administrative day-to-day events in the office.

I ensure that the building is maintained and that we follow the fire regulations. One important but minor detail is to ensure that staff and guests have a supply of coffee and tea.

I keep on top of the enquiries email box and deal with daily phone calls. Other responsibilities I have are to ensure that staff have the necessary PPE and uniform.

I ensure the company vehicles are road worthy with the appropriate insurance cover.

As part of the facilities role, where possible I am trying to make some cost savings while ensuring that we receive good service levels or products from suppliers.





*with Administration &
Permitting Officer Wilson*

Just over 85% of the Fish for Sale Permits have now been transferred to the online Permitting System.

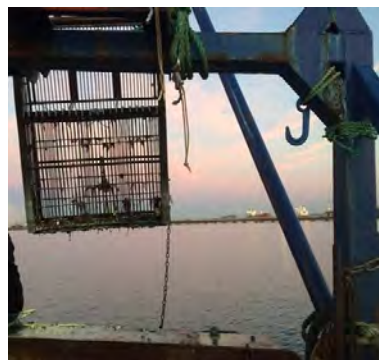
Fishers are contacted 2 months before the expiry date of their permit and notified that they need to apply through the Permitting System, a guidance sheet is provided, and every effort is made to make this an easy process for the fisher.



November is the 7th month out of 8 that Poole Harbour Dredge Permit Holders are required to submit monthly catch returns.

Although processing the catch returns is a usual task for the Permitting Officer, I have been ensuring prompt input of the catch return data to support the RPT with part of the In-Season Monitoring Programme under the PHDP M&CP.

The Solent Dredge Cat A 2025/26 Permit application period closed on 31st August. 49 applications were received and processed all of which were eligible for a permit.



Following the amendment of the SDPB Cat A Permit Conditions after a consultation and review, 40 permits were issued ready for the season start on 1st November with 9 fishers choosing to take their permits out at a later date.

This will be the last manual application, processing and issue of this permit. Development of the Solent Dredge Cat A Permits on the online Permitting System will take place ready to be rolled out for applications for the 2026/27 season.



with Accounts Administrator
Paul Savage

Autumn 2025

Monthly finance meetings with the CEO have continued and quarterly reports have been introduced for analysis of vessel fuel costs and vehicle fuel and maintenance costs.

Although whole team meetings are now only quarterly, with meetings in the intervening months focused on either RPT or CET, I have attended all the meetings so far to give me more background on what is happening in Southern IFCA.

The audit took place in July and I provided assistance to Jen Carr with this.

For the Solent Dredge Permit payments, although invoices were not sent to the applicants, they were raised on Xero with the PLN as a secondary reference to make it easier to match incoming payments.

In addition, the day-to-day processing of financial transactions has continued.



AIFCA Annual Subscription

Report by The Executive Sub-Committee

A. Purpose

In accordance with Recommendation 15 of the Minutes of the Full Authority Meeting 18th September 2025:

Recommendation

15. That the Executive Sub-Committee write to the AIFCA on behalf of the Authority requesting information on the use of Southern IFCA's subscriptions as well as clarity on the role & funding of the Communications and Engagement Officer.

B. Recommendation

That the information be received.

C. Annexes

Annex 1: AIFCA Subscriptions Letter- dated 3rd October 2025 (ESC to AIFCA)

Annex 2: Southern IFCA Subscriptions Response letter – dated 21st October 2025 (AIFCA to ESC)

Annex 3: Further clarifications – email chain (Chair & Vice Chair to AIFCA)

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Unit 3, Holes Bay Park, Sterte Avenue West, Poole, Dorset. BH15 2AA
01202 721373
enquiries@southern-ifca.gov.uk
www.southern-ifca.gov.uk



Via email communication only to:

g.tomlinson483@gmail.com,
m.williams@devonandsevernifca.gov.uk
Robert.clark@association-ifca.org.uk

Annual AIFCA Subscriptions

3rd October 2025

Dear Tony, Mike and Rob,

We are writing on behalf of the Members of Southern IFCA, regarding our annual subscription to the AIFCA. As an Authority, we greatly value our relationship with the AIFCA, recognising the importance of a national body to represent the ten coastal IFCAs.

To offer a little background, during our recent September Authority meeting, and in accordance with the Southern IFCA Financial Regulations, the Accountant reported all ex. VAT payments over £5k to the Authority via a Budget Control Statement. Following the presentation of this item, a number of Members raised questions regarding the increased cost of the AIFCA 2025-2026 subscription when compared to previous years. As such, the Executive Sub-Committee took an action at the meeting to write to the AIFCA in order to help the wider Authority understand how the AIFCA subscription is used.

Additionally, and as part of Southern IFCA's ongoing commitment to ensuring value for money and transparency in the use of public funds; namely the levies that Southern IFCA receive from our six constituent Local Councils, Southern IFCA are currently reviewing all of our subscription-based contributions to better inform our budget setting in Autumn 2025.

With this in mind, we would be grateful if you could provide us with details of:

- How Southern IFCA's 2025-2026 subscription of £14,342.42 (ex. VAT) has been used to date, and where it will continue to be used during the remainder of the current financial year – in particular, how this money is being used to support the work of Southern IFCA;
- The benefits and outcomes which have been delivered to date (within the current financial year), as well as anticipated outcomes for the remainder of the financial year, by the AIFCA, which are of relevance to the work of Southern IFCA;
- The anticipated 2026-2027 AIFCA Subscription fees (ex. VAT);
- How the forthcoming 2026-2027 AIFCA subscriptions will be supporting the priorities and responsibilities of Southern IFCA;
- Any future plans or initiatives that will add further value to our continued membership.

Recognising avoidance of unnecessary work, please note that the AIFCA Annual Strategy and AIFCA Annual Report are shared with the Membership as a matter of routine; as such we would

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Unit 3, Holes Bay Park, Sterte Avenue West, Poole, Dorset. BH15 2AA
01202 721373
enquiries@southern-ifca.gov.uk
www.southern-ifca.gov.uk



appreciate the details provided in response to this letter being tailored to Southern IFCA and our constituent Local Councils, as the Membership are already in receipt of these documents.

In addition, the wider Membership are also interested to learn more about how the new AIFCA Communication & Engagement Manager will help to support the work of Southern IFCA moving forward, and whether this post is funded in part by the AIFCA subscription.

Southern IFCA are, of course, keen to maintain support for the AIFCA and to continue contributing to the collective efforts, recognising the importance of a national model to support the work delivered locally. However, it is essential that we are able to demonstrate to our wider Membership and constituent Local Councils, clear benefits and impact from a number of budgetary headings, including Southern IFCA's AIFCA subscription, in order to justify ongoing funding. I am sure you can appreciate that, in the current economic climate, coupled with the pending reorganisation of Local Councils following the Governments' planned devolution in early 2026, these discussions are more relevant than ever before.

We would appreciate it if you could share this information with the Executive Sub-Committee at your earliest convenience, and no later than the 1st November 2025, recognising that preparations will soon begin for the Southern IFCA Annual Budget setting 2026-2027 and subsequent levy discussions in early December 2025.

Yours sincerely,

The Southern IFCA Executive Sub-Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Fuller'.

Cllr. Paul Fuller,
Chair of Southern IFCA
Isle of Wight Council

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dr Antony Jensen'.

Dr Antony Jensen,
Chair of Southern IFCA TAC

Crispen Goodall
Cllr. Crispen Goodall,
BCP Council

Rob Hughes

Cllr. Rob Hughes
Vice Chair of Southern IFCA
Dorset Council

Richard Stride
Richard Stride
Vice Chair of Southern IFCA TAC

Rob Cooper
Cllr. Rob Cooper
Hampshire Country Council

The Association of Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities

Chair: Tony Tomlinson MBE
Vice Chair: Prof. Mike Williams
Chief Officer: Robert Clark MBA



robert.clark@association-ifca.org.uk
www.association-ifca.org.uk

Cllr. Paul Fuller. Chairman Southern IFCA
Cllr. Rob Hughes. Vice Chairman Southern IFCA
By email only to paulfulleriw@gmail.com and cllrrob.hughes@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

21st October 2025

Dear Cllr. Paul Fuller and Cllr. Rob Hughes,

Following circulation of the letter regarding AIFCA subscriptions (received 6th October) I would like to offer a consolidated response addressing our financial position, delivery priorities, including the continuing support of IFCAs, and ongoing leadership in national programmes, particularly our role in responding to the IFCA Conduct and Operations Report and developing the AIFCA Spending Review Response.

Our Leadership in Responding to the Conduct and Operations Report

At the March 2025 Members Forum, IFCAAs agreed that AIFCA would:

- **Lead and provide the secretariat** for the new *Conduct and Operations Recommendations Implementation Steering Group (CORRIS)*, established jointly with Defra, the MMO, and the IFCA Chief Officers Group (COG);
- **Coordinate the development of an Action Plan** to address the report's recommendations; and
- **Ensure direct IFCA representation** in all workstreams, ensuring transparency and consistency with our statutory duties under the Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009).

Subsequently, The AIFCA has taken a **lead coordinating role** in delivering the IFCAAs' collective response to the *Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities: Conduct and Operations 2018–2022* report, published by Defra in February 2025.

This leadership has positioned the AIFCA as the principal conduit between Defra and IFCAAs on the implementation of the report's findings. The Steering Group—chaired by IFCAAs and serviced by AIFCA—has already overseen the creation of task and finish groups focused on governance, funding, stakeholder engagement, and communications.

Through this structure, the Association ensures that Defra's future reporting and reform proposals are grounded in the operational realities of all the IFCAAs.

AIFCA Delivery Projects 2025–26

As outlined in the *2025–26 Delivery Projects Overview and Global Budgets*, AIFCA is delivering a full portfolio of national initiatives on behalf of IFCAAs, including:

- **Conduct and Operations Implementation (CORRIS):** Coordination, stakeholder engagement materials, training, and transparent reporting outputs.

The Association of Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities

Chair: Tony Tomlinson MBE

Vice Chair: Prof. Mike Williams

Chief Officer: Robert Clark MBA



robert.clark@association-ifca.org.uk

www.association-ifca.org.uk

- **Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs):** Leadership in developing and coordinating national approaches, particularly through the *Cockle FMP Forum*, where IFCAs and AIFCA are recognised by Defra as lead partners.
- **Marine Protected Area (MPA) Management:** Representation on the Defra MPA Programme Board, Delivery Group, and Communications Group, ensuring the IFCA model continues to shape national MPA delivery policy.
- **Inshore and Small-Scale Fisheries Consortium (ISSF):** Coordinating the consortium, supporting data and policy development, and contributing to the forthcoming 2026 National Inshore and Small-Scale Fisheries ISSF national conference.
- **Coastal Health Project:** A fully funded national initiative linking marine management with broader “one coastal system” health and resilience objectives. This project currently funds (50%) the **Communications and Engagement Manager post** for 2025/26, ensuring dedicated outreach, stakeholder communication, and project promotion of IFCAs’ work at no additional cost to IFCAs this financial year. Despite Southern IFCA being the only IFCA to decide not to support this project, the collective decision to proceed will deliver substantive benefits to Southern IFCA including creating a system through which to respond to marine events of unknown origin as well as substantially enhancing the reputation of the IFCAs in this area. All of this information you will have considered previously, so I will not rehearse the reasons why this project is important but would be happy to do so again if requested.

These projects collectively reflect the Association’s growing role, upon behalf of IFCAs, in **cross-government collaboration**, international engagement, and systems-level marine governance.

Moreover, as Simon Pengelly presented to your TAC members recently, we are delivering a series of projects, which are directly funded by investment from Defra; they include;

Data sharing infrastructure;

- To create an AIFCA Share Point for all IFCAs to share data both internally and externally
- Create Common Databases in one place
- Investment in IT hardware to support data sharing

Members Support and Community Awareness:

- Develop materials to increase understanding of the duties of the IFCA and promote transparency
- Deliver IFCA Members & Officers “teach-ins” to share expertise and knowledge.
- Develop promotional materials to support members awareness and understanding of key activities of the IFCAs.

Inshore Fisheries Engagement

The Association of Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities

Chair: Tony Tomlinson MBE
Vice Chair: Prof. Mike Williams
Chief Officer: Robert Clark MBA



robert.clark@association-ifca.org.uk
www.association-ifca.org.uk

- To provide a space outside of the day-to-day operations of the IFCAs to support the continued development of fishing participants engagement with IFCAs (the ISSF project).

Communications

- Produce a quarterly AIFCA newsletter
- Produce an IFCA Annual Impact Report, which sets out the positive impact all IFCAs are achieving

Programme Governance

- To commission an independent advice on best practice complaints process handling for all the IFCAs.
- To produce independent advice on best practice handling of declarations of interest at meetings.

I provide this as a brief overview because your chairman and chief officer have previously approved these projects, and they have received updates on their delivery. This programme of works, where they are externally contracted, is funded by monies provided by Defra.

Financial Position and Subscriptions

The **latest budget control report (September 2025)** shows that AIFCA is operating within approved financial parameters, with year-to-date expenditure in line with projections and project-related income (including from the Coastal Health Project and Defra-funded programmes) offsetting some costs.

The Association's fixed operating costs—principally staffing, communications, and statutory representation—remain constant. The Directors and Members Forum have sought to cover the fixed costs by way of subscription. Project costs being met by income derived from grant or the provision of services to others (principally Defra).

It is of note that the cost of membership of the AIFCA is supported by a central government grant paid to IFCAs. Under the **New Burdens formula**, local authorities that fund **Southern IFCA** receive **£13,000** annually to support their contribution to the Association. *The actual cost to the authority is therefore the balance of its subscription after that funding is applied, which is £1,342.42 or 0.095% of the Southern IFCA budget this financial year.*

To achieve this value for money, whilst increasing the outcomes the AIFCA delivers, the AIFCA has consistently kept its cost at or below inflation. For example, if the cost of the AIFCA had increased with inflation since its creation, then the real cost today would be £20,248. If it would assist your members the Association would be happy to provide further advice how the grant to the local authorities that fund the IFCA is applied on this.

The **subscription rate for 2026–27** will be determined at the **December 2025 Members Forum**. One of the proposed options will be an **inflation-linked increase**, reflecting rising fixed costs. These fixed costs are primarily associated with the two permanent members of staff. We, as you, must try to estimate the negotiated wage settlement for employers, which

The Association of Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities

Chair: Tony Tomlinson MBE
Vice Chair: Prof. Mike Williams
Chief Officer: Robert Clark MBA



robert.clark@association-ifca.org.uk
www.association-ifca.org.uk

this year was 3.2%. I appreciate this creates uncertainty for you in your budget setting. But thinking ahead to the forthcoming budget and to put it into perspective, using realistic scenarios, a 2.5% subscription increase to £14,700.98 when compared to a 3.5% increase in subscription or £14,845.40, would add £144.42 to your cost.

Funding for the **Communications and Engagement Manager**. The cost of Emily Bulled, who is employed on a two-year fixed-term contract, is being met through a combination of AIFCA reserves and external project income. In accordance with the Association's Reserves Policy, £100,000 was released from funds carried forward from the previous financial year to support strategic priorities, including this post.

As approved at the last meeting of the AIFCA Members Forum for the current financial year, the **Coastal Health Programme** has agreed to fund **50% of the role's full-time equivalent**. This contribution reflects the proportion of Emily's time dedicated to delivering the programme, which provides substantial value to all IFCAs through its focus on coastal resilience, partnership working, and community health in the marine environment.

I am sure Southern IFCA will welcome the AIFCA securing separate funding to strengthen **national emergency response preparedness**, ensuring that all IFCAs are well positioned to support coastal communities during crises and environmental incidents.

I am pleased that Emily has already met with your Chief Officer to discuss her work plan and receive feedback from your organisation. I trust this has provided a further useful insight into her role and its relevance to your IFCA. In addition, her work plan was shared when the role was agreed, I can send this again if that would be useful. Furthermore, should it be helpful, I would be delighted to arrange for Emily to present her work and future plans directly to your Authority members.

National and International Influence

It is important that your members are aware of the scale of recognition AIFCA, on behalf of IFCAs, now commands at the national and international level:

- **National Policy Representation:** AIFCA sits on the Fisheries Management Plan Programme Board and Marine Protected Area Programme Boards, Delivery Groups, and the Communications Groups.
- **Direct Outcomes:** AIFCA's advocacy was central to securing the **Defra capital grant for IFCAs**. This included securing funding for Southern IFCA's patrol vessel, I must stress that this funding **would not have occurred without the work of the AIFCA**. It would be helpful if members of the Authority understood the significance of this achievement. As it represents a significant return on their investment. If helpful I can ask the Chief Officer to explain to your leadership team how this was achieved as it represents a success of lobbying on behalf of all authorities.

The Association of Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities

Chair: Tony Tomlinson MBE
Vice Chair: Prof. Mike Williams
Chief Officer: Robert Clark MBA



robert.clark@association-ifca.org.uk
www.association-ifca.org.uk

- **International Outreach:** AIFCA represents England's IFCAs at major fora, including the ISSF Consortium and the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) knowledge exchanges.
- **Leadership in ISSF:** As noted on the NICRE website, AIFCA provides coordination and leadership in developing best practice and stakeholder partnerships within the ISSF network.
- **Recruitment Transformation:** The Association has also modernised the **member recruitment process**, enhancing diversity, consistency, and transparency across all IFCAs.
- **Training:** I am pleased to say that we have recently received notification that our Spending Review Submission for this financial year has been successful and we, collectively, have been awarded costs to offset the national expenditure on the Brixham Training Course. Furthermore, AIFCA's Chief Officer has written a training manual (in his own time) for the Environment, Conservation and Research Course that he developed and supported the successful delivery of in 2025 and will again in 2026.

These activities directly align with Defra's stated recognition, most recently in its 2025 *Conduct and Operations Report*, that AIFCA plays a critical role in ensuring the efficiency, accountability, and visibility of the IFCA model within the wider Defra family.

Next Steps and Member Engagement

As we approach the December meeting, the AIFCA will prepare:

1. A **subscription options paper**, showing financial scenarios with and without inflationary adjustment;
2. A summary of **project delivery and outcomes** for 2026–27;

I am pleased to also attach / link to, if they have not been previously circulated to yourselves by your representatives on the AIFCA;

1. The **AIFCA Spending Review submission** (Appendix One), and
2. The **AIFCA Delivery Report for 2024/25** <https://association-ifca.org.uk/launch-of-aifcas-annual-report/>

Your engagement and feedback remain essential. The AIFCA's influence and achievements from vessel funding to national policy leadership stem directly from our collective unity. As the Defra review process demonstrates, the strength of the IFCA model lies not only in local delivery but in our capacity to act together, through AIFCA, as a single, credible voice.

The Association of Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities

Chair: Tony Tomlinson MBE

Vice Chair: Prof. Mike Williams

Chief Officer: Robert Clark MBA



robert.clark@association-ifca.org.uk

www.association-ifca.org.uk

Yours sincerely,

Tony Tomlinson MBE

Chairman

Association of Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (AIFCA).

Appendix

1) Spending Review 2026/27–2028/29 submission

cc. enquiries@southern-ifca.gov.uk Southern IFCA
pia.bateman@southern-ifca.gov.uk Chief Executive Officer Southern IFCA
robert.clark@association-org.uk Chief Officer AIFCA

APPENDIX ONE

Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs)

Implementing National Marine Policy Through Effective Local Delivery

Spending Review 2026/27–2028/29

Prepared by:

The Chief Officers Group (COG) & the Association of IFCAs (AIFCA)

Contact:

Julian Gregory, Chair IFCA COG juliangregory@eastern-ifca.gov.uk

Robert Clark, Chief Officer AIFCA robert.clark@association-ifca.org.uk

1. Introduction

This submission outlines the proposed funding requirements for the **Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs)** for the period **2026/27–2028/29**. It builds upon the *SR25–27* submission and reflects the latest findings of the **IFCA Conduct and Operations Report (2018–2022)**, national inflation forecasts, and the increasing demands associated with the delivery of **Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs)**, the **management of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)** and the **Fisheries Act 2020**.

It provides a framework for both **national coordination** and **local adaptation**. Each IFCA may include specific regional priorities, vessel replacement schedules, or digital infrastructure needs to illustrate local delivery requirements.

2. Background and Policy Context

IFCAs are small, regionally accountable statutory bodies charged with delivering the sustainable management of inshore fisheries and marine conservation. Their success depends on the ability to:

- Deliver **Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs)**;
- Implement **Marine Protected Area (MPA)** management;
- Support the ambitions of the **Environment Act 2021** and the **Environmental Improvement Plan (2023)**;
- Engage with and support local communities, fishers, and coastal industries.

Since their creation under the **Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009**, IFCAs have adapted to new responsibilities, technological change, and heightened policy expectations. However, the **new burdens funding**, originally set at **£3 million per year**, has not increased since 2011, leading to a significant real-terms reduction in available resources.

3. Findings from the IFCA Evaluations and Conduct and Operations Report(s)

The IFCA Conduct and Operation 2014 – 2018 report to parliament concluded that “since 2014, the IFCAs have delivered the recommendations of the previous report and they have demonstrated the local leadership that is expected of them as statutory regulators” but that, “Current and future funding, compounded by increasing responsibilities, also emerges as a significant factor in the effective delivery of the IFCAs’ statutory duties” (Defra, 2018). A key finding of the IFCA Evaluation Report (2021) is that a consensus emerges that the IFCAs did not [and do not] have sufficient funds to fulfil their wider duties and this is compounded by changes in central government policy, associated with marine protected area management.

The most recent *Conduct and Operations Report (2018–2022)* identified the following key areas for improvement:

Finding	Recommendation / Need	Proposed Response	SR26–29
Insufficient data and monitoring for non-quota and small-scale fisheries	Expand local research and monitoring programmes	New capital investment in survey equipment and digital data systems	
Inconsistent or delayed implementation of management measures	Strengthen planning, evidence, and capacity	Increased revenue to maintain statutory delivery and monitoring	

Finding	Recommendation / Need	Proposed Response	SR26–29
Limited integration of data and intelligence between IFCA national bodies	Develop shared digital systems and platforms	National rollout of CLUE intelligence system + IFCA–MMO API integration	
Variability in transparency, communication, and reporting	Improve public reporting and accessibility of data	Power BI Pro dashboard system across all IFCA	
Workforce capacity and skills development	Invest in training and professionalisation	Annual residential training programme for 30 officers	

These recommendations form the core rationale for this spending review.

4. Key Challenges (2026–2029)

- **Inflationary pressures** (estimated 2.7–3.0% CPI annually, OBR forecast) have further eroded IFCA resources.
- **Aging patrol vessels and assets** across most IFCA require replacement or refit.
- **Expanding digital and data requirements**, especially for joint enforcement and evidence gathering.
- **Delivery of Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs)** requires increased staff time, monitoring, and stakeholder engagement to support national and local delivery mechanisms.
- Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) often require adaptive management and active compliance and enforcement monitoring
- **Capacity constraints** in enforcement and evidence collection, identified in the 2022 Conduct and Operations review.

5. Strategic Objectives

Over the SR26–29 period, IFCAs will:

1. **Restore the real-term value** of the new burdens settlement to sustain statutory delivery.
2. **Invest in capital assets**, Modernisation including reduced/low-emission propulsion, meeting latest regulation standards and hull refurbishment. Alongside this, investment in drones and other remote sensing technologies.
3. **Implement digital integration** with MMO and Defra systems through the CLUE intelligence platform and API development.
4. **Enhance training, governance, and professional capability** across the IFCA network.
5. **Ensure effective local delivery of Fisheries Management Plans**, enabling adaptive management and evidence-based regulation.
6. **Management of Marine Protected Areas**, including delivery of compensatory MPAs and input into the MPA network review

6. Proposal and Case for Investment

6.1 Revenue – New Burdens Settlement Increase

The annual **Defra new burdens grant** has remained fixed at £3 million since 2011. Adjusted for cumulative inflation (approx. 70%+ loss of value since inception), the real value of this support has fallen significantly (see Appendix One IFCA New Burdens Background for further details). To restore capacity:

Year	Proposed Settlement	Adjustment Basis
2026/27	£5.5 million	Restores real-term value lost since 2011
2027/28	£5.7 million	CPI-linked 2.7% forecast
2028/29	£5.9 million	CPI-linked 2.8% forecast

This uplift enables IFCAs to maintain enforcement, staffing, and monitoring capacity at levels consistent with statutory duties and new national policy delivery.

6.3 Digital Integration & Intelligence Infrastructure

A national **Digital Integration Programme** will address weaknesses identified in the FCO Report.

Components:

- **CLUE Intelligence System Rollout** across all IFCAs, supporting consistent intelligence handling, compliance tracking, and joint operations.
- **IFCA–MMO API Development** to connect local enforcement and permit data into the MMO's **Mobile Working System**.

Item	Cost (2026/27)	Ongoing (p.a.)	Purpose
CLUE Integration & API Development	£300,000	£40,000	Shared intelligence & enforcement data flow
Hosting, Maintenance & Security	—	Included	Managed under national framework

This system will enhance collaboration, reduce duplication, and directly support **FMP and MPA monitoring and compliance reporting**.

6.4 Data Analytics and Reporting

In accordance with the (draft) IFCA REM and AI policy; to improve evidence-based management and transparency:

- **Power BI Pro Licensing** for 10 IFCAs and the AIFCA (approx. 110 user seats).
- **Cost:** ~£13,200 per annum.
- **Purpose:** To provide consistent dashboards for fisheries data, FMP performance tracking, enforcement outcomes, and stakeholder reporting.

By way of example, Cornwall IFCA is trialling Power BI to integrate fine scale crustacean fishing effort data to support development of regional effort management to support delivery of Crab and Lobster FMP. Isle of Scilly IFCA will tailor a dashboard to provide content to

share/make available local priorities and fisheries data to assist the transfer of information between agencies.

6.5 Training and Workforce Development

6.5.1 Residential Training Course

Each year, a **national residential training programme** will deliver primary professional development for **30 officers**, covering:

- **Fisheries Enforcement** – fisheries legislation, officer powers, at-sea operations, and safety.
- **Marine Fisheries & Conservation Management** – ecology, policy implementation, adaptive management.
-

Venue: Primarily based at Brixham, with opportunity for rotating secondary locations (potential regional hosting opportunities).

Cost:

Financial Year Inflation Rate Adjusted Value (£)

2026/27	—	£44,000
2027/28	2.7%	£45,188
2028/29	2.8%	£46,453

6.5.2 Ongoing CPD and on the job Training

Each year a **rolling programme of externally sourced training courses** will deliver current and up-to-date **continuous professional development and refresher training** for **20 officers** regarding enforcement and investigations, to continue the development of a culture of investigative rigour and professionalism.

- Case file building, PACE and CPIA/Disclosure
- Intelligence (National Intelligence Model)
- Notebooks and Witness Statements (including officer statements) and interviewing of suspects
- Courtroom skills and giving of evidence

Venue: rotating locations (potential regional hosting opportunities)

Cost:

Financial Year Inflation Rate Adjusted Value (£)

2026/27	—	£31,000
2027/28	2.7%	£31,837
2028/29	2.8%	£32,727

6.6 Delivering Fisheries Management Plans

The proposals will enable each IFCA to:

- Collect, analyse, and share FMP evidence efficiently;
- Engage stakeholders through data-informed decision-making;
- Implement adaptive management in real time using shared intelligence;
- Demonstrate measurable outcomes for FMP actions through transparent reporting.

By way of example, Cornwall IFCA are collaborating with catching sector to gather inshore king scallop data to inform regional stock assessments, meet a key evidence gap in King Scallop FMP and support development of new co-management measures.

Overview

There is a need to increase the capacity of the IFCA's to enable meaningful engagement in shaping and delivering the 36 English Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs) outlined in the Joint Fisheries Statement. Inevitably this requires investment in staff time but as well as enabling the contribution of valuable information and expertise that exists within the IFCA's to FMP development.

Background

Fisheries Management Plans are a key requirement of the Fisheries Act and now form the basis of future UK fisheries management. There is strong support from Defra to engage IFCA's to feed into FMP development, evidence gathering and implementation.

Effective governance of FMPs is emerging as a key challenge and opportunity. IFCA's provide a framework through which to reconcile competing demands associated with developing sustainable fisheries with the effects of marine resource extraction. This was recognised during the passage of the Fisheries Bill.

IFCA's manage the activities of the inshore fleet; a fleet that has historically been disadvantaged in the allocation of certain fishing opportunities. Furthermore, many of the most important fisheries for inshore fisheries are not well understood or accounted for through national fisheries management frameworks, in particular the mollusc and crustacea fisheries. Moreover, the allocation of fishing opportunities using social economic and environment criteria is potentially one of the main benefits of the new fisheries management plans. IFCA's can play a significant role in developing and helping to implement new management measure in this policy space.

The absence of adequate stock assessments for many of the key commercial stocks, particularly non-pressure stocks, has been highlighted in the published FMPs and can be traced to the lack of focus on these stocks in national and previously EU, policy. The IFCA's can support the collection of evidence to further the underlying MSY objective for many of these FMPs, whilst helping to deliver several Joint Fisheries Statement objectives in collecting evidence from a wide range of sources and helping to make it publicly available (3.2.10, 3.2.15).

Importantly IFCA's are able to engage locally and have a proven track record in developing collaboration to support co-management. A lack of investment and reducing budgets, coupled with increased demands on the IFCA's to deliver national policy, have limited the capacity of the IFCA's to embrace the full opportunities that arise as a result of further collaboration and co- creation of management.

According to the IFCA Evaluation Report 2021 (ibid.) conducting partnerships is one of the key strengths of the IFCAs but there is increasing demand for partnerships with the fishing industry and recreational anglers to help improve trust. It is an area that urgently needs to be addressed for a successful fishing industry after Brexit (Ford and Stewart, 2019). Investment in this area will deliver significant benefits and support the sustainable development of inshore fisheries in all their forms.

Proposal

It is proposed to increase the capacity of the IFCAs to help deliver the objectives and actions of the overall FMP programme as well as specific actions outlined in individual FMPs by increasing the staff capacity in the IFCAs. The proposal has three elements:

- Continuation of the work supported by funding allocated to IFCAs during the 2021 spending review.
- Coordinating delivery across the IFCAs.
- Enhancement of capacity for enhance evidence collection to inform development of the FMPs.

The nature of the spending review process lends itself to specific roles/functions and costs being associated with posts. This brings inevitable challenges to delivery bodies in terms of recruitment, retention and other associated HR issues and it also doesn't account for the context of individual IFCAs. With this in mind, whilst the bid is for specific posts it is suggested that it should be seen having a degree of flexibility to enable individual IFCAs to deliver the required outputs with the use of equivalent resources.

To enhance capacity in IFCAs to support FMP programme delivery

Funding to support resource equivalent to 1 FTE post per IFCA (£52.2k per IFCA). The outputs include;

- Planning/ coordinating/ shaping/ delivering/ reporting on FMP progress at Authority meetings and in annual planning and reporting.
- Contribute to Defra's strategic FMP planning, delivery and reporting on progress.
- Attend, contribute and help further the actions of management groups, working groups and specific meetings.
- Input regional needs into FMP planning and project delivery and where possible coordinate delivery of FMP actions across IFCAs at a regional scale
- Engage local fishers, stakeholders and partners in FMPs and their delivery, and where possible involve local fishers in the delivery of specific actions.
- Help further longer-term or less immediate FMP actions that are regarded as important locally.

Title	Description	Cost per annum
10 x FTE or comparable resource to support capacity to deliver	To enhance capacity in IFCAs to support FMP programme delivery. FMP Project Officers to support programme implementation	£522,560

Financial Year Inflation Rate Adjusted Value (£)

2026/27	—	£522,560
2027/28	2.7%	£536,647
2028/29	2.8%	£551,682

6.7 Protecting and enhancing the marine environment.

The proposals will help each IFCA to:

- Review and refine existing management measures for current MPA network, through adaptive management, drawing on enhanced intelligence and evidence capacity.
- Support the delivery of compensatory MPAs through national strategic input and local evidence and engagement to identify candidate site selection.
- Support the development of the MPA Network Review through strategic input into national process delivery, informed with regional detail on evidence and governance from IFCA case studies.

Overview

The publication of the Environmental Improvement Plan in 2023 has set clear targets for the improvement of the marine protected network and in doing so, has increased the pace at which management has to be both delivered. Crucially, this improvement must be measurable, and its positive impacts observed within these sites. Building on 12 years of active and effective MPA management following the 'revised approach', the new challenge for IFCA's during this spending review period will be in the integration of MPA management with the emerging requirements for FMP development and implementation. Success will depend on working effectively across these policy areas, often with the same stakeholders, as envisaged through the provisions and spirit of the Fisheries Act 2020.

Identifying the potential for opportunities between the protection of MPAs and wider ecosystem and fisheries management requirements will form a key strand to our work and will help us to fulfil shared commitments to delivering GES as articulated through the Joint Fisheries Statement. We will also focus on engagement with our local communities to explore and understand the benefits that a well-run MPA network can bring to them, as well as to the wider environment and the health of the fish and shellfish stocks that depend upon it.

Background

UK waters contain a range of MPA designation types, established under different legislation, each with its own set of conservation objectives designed to protect a broad array of species and habitats. Together they create a national network of sites from the intertidal out to the continental shelf which contribute to the UK Government's vision of "clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas" and the delivery of Good Environmental Status (GES) descriptors 1, 3,4 and 6.

Under Sections 153 and 154 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, IFCA's are responsible for the management of fishing activities within inshore (0-6nm) MPAs and must take the necessary steps to ensure their conservation objectives are furthered. Between 40 -75 % of the IFCA districts are covered by an MPA designation or overlapping layers of designated sites and as a result, MPA management represents between 40-50% of all IFCA's operational activity, from assessment, evidence gathering and monitoring through to byelaw development, compliance and enforcement and community engagement. For some IFCA's, such as Eastern with circa 96% of its district having one or more MPA designation, virtually all elements of work are influenced by environmental considerations. For IFCA's who manage shellfisheries under regulating orders or byelaws, the thread of MPA management is also woven tightly through the fabric of these fisheries and the resolution of difficult challenges where conservation is often perceived in conflict with fishing activity, is a frequent occurrence but is an area where IFCA's consistently deliver workable solutions.

The series of time bounded targets articulated in the EIP 2023 span the SR period of 2025 to 2027, leading to the requirement of 48% of designated features in favourable condition by the 31st of January 2028, as a milestone towards the eventual target of 70% designated features

by 2042. To deliver our duties and help to contribute to meeting this important target, IFCAs will continue to refine and update appropriate assessments and utilise the outcomes of these assessments to inform current and future management. This management in some cases will be delivered appropriately using monitoring and control plans containing thresholds to ensure that increases in fishing activities can trigger different management outcomes if required. These include the development and implementation of new IFCA byelaws and permit conditions.

The designation of a pilot inshore HPMA (Allonby Bay) and the process by which the conservation objectives of this designation will form part of operational activities in this particular IFCA district and resources will continue to be required to support this transition to full management. This pilot offers the opportunity for shared learning and must inform any further proposals for site selection, respecting the newly published guidance. IFCAs can offer a vital link to local communities through which better processes can be established to explore this work further.

Ensuring compliance with measures to manage MPAs is a key function and strength of IFCA delivery and all IFCAs have an effective enforcement presence throughout their districts and a record of successful prosecutions relating to marine protected areas. Enforcement activity up to and including prosecutions is vital to improve compliance and protection of these sites. They also ensure that the affected stakeholders, usually within the commercial fishing industry, can see that enforcement is undertaken where compliance issues are identified. This builds confidence and trust within affected fleet sectors which improves the flow of intelligence into the IFCAs as well as raising the overall levels of compliance with existing legislation. We recognise that we have more to do to explain the value of compliance and enforcement and would like the opportunity to collate and explain our work more fully.

This latter point is important when considering our role in delivering the UK Marine Strategy through working with local communities to deliver sustainable fisheries but also to advocate for the wider objectives in the strategy to embed good practises and compliance. We wish to demonstrate this advocacy through a project to explore and celebrate the benefits of MPAs within local communities, to foster engagement and support for the network and the wider aims of the Marine Strategy by showing its relevance to lives lived on the coast.

Delivery and resource

1 x FTE per IFCA or comparable resource to support capacity to deliver:

1. Assessment, monitoring and evidence gathering to inform and support improvement.
2. Development of management mechanisms, including where appropriate voluntary measures, monitoring and control plan, and IFCA byelaws.
3. Innovation in data collection – new projects using AI, remote sensing etc etc;
4. Integration of MPA management within directly managed fisheries and wider fisheries management through FMP process, synergy with evidence needs for FMP etc.

Title	Description	Cost per annum
10 x FTE or comparable resource to support capacity to deliver	Protecting and enhancing the marine environment	£522,560

Financial Year Inflation Rate Adjusted Value (£)

2026/27	—	£522,560
2027/28	2.7%	£536,647

Financial Year Inflation Rate Adjusted Value (£)

2028/29 2.8% £551,682

HPMA Management

1. HPMA management (Allonby Bay)– on same basis as above

Title	Description	Cost per annum
1 x FTE or comparable resource in hours to support capacity to deliver	Protecting and enhancing the marine environment through HPMA	£52,256
Patrol costs	20 x patrols (including land and sea)	£40,000
TOTAL		£92,256

Financial Year Inflation Rate Adjusted Value (£)

2026/27 — £92,256

2027/28 2.7% £94,745

2028/29 2.8% £97,398

6.8 Community Engagement & Permitting, Consents and Licensing

10 x FTE or comparable resource in hours to support capacity to deliver.

Overview

The need for additional capacity in this area is driven by three key policies.

- 1) Building capacity for regional co-design and co-management of commercial and recreational fisheries. The JFS (2022) clearly sets out a vision and commitment to enabling more inclusive involvement of coastal stakeholders in decision-making and recognises this as a key step in progressing co-management of fisheries and marine resources. However, to achieve this vision, government must first take stock of, and further invest in, the quality of its relationships with coastal stakeholders, in particular (but not exclusively), the commercial and recreational fishing sectors.
- 2) Marine planning and consents; ensuring local engagement. Ensuring local knowledge, accountability and community engagement supports sustainable development. IFCAs have additional responsibilities for marine licensing, over and above that which was envisaged when IFCAs were established.
- 3) Securing sustainable growth of aquaculture and mariculture and recreational sea fishing. The English Aquaculture Strategy (Seafish, 2020) establishes a bold ambition to achieve a tenfold increase in production volume to around 90,000 tonnes by 2040. To enable an increase in aquaculture, IFCAs will be required, through both the marine planning process and through local engagement, to facilitate this sustainable growth in some of our most congested, important and protected waters. The national Angling for Good strategy requires local action to deliver effective outcomes for local communities. The IFCAs have a demonstrated commitment to encourage and develop sustainable angling opportunities.

Background

Community Engagement

“Our future vision is that industry should play a greater role in managing fisheries. This can include work to develop new management practices and contributing to fisheries science being more actively engaged in fisheries management decisions and co-designing future policy”.

“There are different models of participatory decision making in place across the UK, which provide the seafood and marine sectors, non-government organisations and coastal communities with a voice in the decisions that impact them. The fisheries policy authorities are committed to further developing and strengthening these arrangements for moving toward co-management of our fisheries and promoting inclusivity and involvement in our management approach across all parts of society”¹.

The JFS (2022) clearly sets out a vision and commitment to enabling more inclusive involvement of coastal stakeholders in decision-making and recognises this as a key step in progressing co-management of fisheries and marine resources. However, to achieve this vision, government must first take stock of, and further invest in, the quality of its relationships with coastal stakeholders, in particular (but not exclusively), the commercial and recreational fishing sectors.

¹ Sections 3.4.1 and 3.4.2. Participatory Decision Making, Joint Fisheries Statement (2022).

Government decisions and current modes of engagement are restricted to engage with whomever will engage in return, which risks further marginalising the interests of the majority fleet (in terms of numbers) and disproportionately benefiting a minority and more powerful elite in the industry. Furthermore, disengagement fuels disengagement, creating a negative feedback loop where management decisions become ever more distant from the needs and priorities of fishers, reinforcing further erosion of relationships. This risks a one-way path to disconnected top-down management and reduced capacity to achieve any form of collaborative co-management.

Building capacity to meaningfully co-design fisheries management involves a different approach, which starts the discussion with the problem in hand, creating space to understand the fisher perspective of the problem (and indeed whether it constitutes a problem in their eyes) and what they might suggest as solutions. This type of deeper involvement first places emphasis on fisher knowledge and fisher-led solutions to management and then connects this knowledge to scientific and management expertise and key decision-making platforms.

Marine planning and consents; ensuring local engagement.

It is stated that a marine plan will: encourage local communities to be involved in planning make the most of growth and job opportunities, consider the environment from the start, enable sustainable development in the marine area integrate with planning on land, save time and money for investors and developers by giving clear guidance on things to consider or avoid, encourage shared use of busy areas to benefit as many industries as possible and encourage developments that consider wildlife and the natural environment.

Key to the successful delivery of these aims is early engagement and intervention in both the marine planning process as well as timely, detailed input into individual applications for marine consents and marine licence applications. In the absence of alternative representative bodies, IFCAs also become a conduit for dialogue between developers and local fishing communities but this is constrained by the lack of available staff resources. Early input at a pre-application stage can assist in the identification and resolution of fisheries impacts and help to provide a mechanism for them to be addressed at a stage where alternatives or meaningful mitigation can be found. The volume of applications in IFCA districts now outstrips capacity to contribute responses, which will be compounded by the expansion of floating wind power, and the development of the next generation of regional marine plans will also require detailed input. Presently this process is not functioning as effectively as it should to deliver the most desirable outcomes, this is due to insufficient resources within the IFCAs.

In 2015 change to the legislation has enabled individuals or organisations to ask a Local Planning Authority (LPA) or Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) to request that the MMO refers a marine licence application to ministers if they think it meets three key criteria.

A Local Planning Authority (LPA) or Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) can advise the MMO that they consider an application meets all the three criteria for referral to Defra ministers. They should do this during the consultation period on the application. The MMO must refer the application to Defra ministers if an LPA or IFCA advises that it meets all three criteria.

LPAs in the devolved administrations can also advise the MMO that the three criteria apply because of potential cross-border effects.

An LPA or IFCA could be affected by a proposed activity because it would take place within their area or near to it. They might also be affected because of the combined effects of several activities occurring over a wider area. The subsequent process arising from referral of an

application to Defra ministers will potentially lead to a public inquiry, placing substantial pressure on the affected IFCA.

Turning now to adaptive management by IFCA's, practice has emerged in response to the need to provide adaptive co-management that embraces the opportunities that permitting byelaws present. Consequently, so as to respond to changes in available evidence, the need to support adaptive management requires additional resources. This will ensure that the IFCA's can provide support and agile management necessary to adapt to changing circumstances.

Securing sustainable growth of aquaculture and mariculture and recreational sea fishing

The ambition target to increase aquaculture in English waters needs to be met by capacity in the IFCA's to support this sustainable development. Evidence has emerged of successful aquaculture support and development of aquaculture. Today IFCA's are manage the largest estate for aquaculture in inshore waters, however increasingly the IFCA's do not have the capacity to support this industry, and this is a risk to the delivery of the ambitious growth in this sector.

The importance of recreational sea angling is now increasingly understood. National policy (Angling for Good) and the Joint Fisheries Statement set out the ambition to deliver greater opportunities for recreational sea anglers. Local actions support these national initiatives and IFCA's play a central role in supporting recreational fishing opportunities in coastal waters and providing advice and support to local communities so as to implement the national sea angling plans.

Proposal

To create a Community Engagement, Permitting, Consents and Licensing Officer position, or equivalent within each IFCA, so as to enable:

- 1) IFCA's to assign one officer as regional stakeholder engagement officer at 2 days a week. To coordinate and report on engagement at the local level, to support and embed national best practice as it relates to stakeholder engagement and to develop and implement regional stakeholder engagement plans.
- 2) Provide capacity (2 days per week) for IFCA's to respond to marine license applications, planning applications, marine consents and pre-application calls for evidence/scoping studies. Work collaboratively across IFCA districts when addressing wider regional scale developments and support the issuance of the permits under the IFCA byelaw scheme to enable adaptive co-management.
- 3) To develop (1 day per week) local aquaculture management strategies and recreational sea angling strategies, to deliver national plans for the fisheries.

Title	Description	Cost per annum
10 x FTE or comparable resource to support capacity to deliver	Community Engagement & Permitting, Consents and Licensing	£522,560

Financial Year Inflation Rate Adjusted Value (£)

2026/27	—	£522,560
2027/28	2.7%	£536,647
2028/29	2.8%	£551,682

7. Capital Programme

Investment is required to modernise vessels, equipment, and survey capabilities:

Item	Description	Estimated Cost / Year
Vessel replacement & refit	Modernisation including reduced/low-emission propulsion, meeting latest regulation standards and hull refurbishment.	£900k–£1.2m
Survey & monitoring equipment	Upgraded sonar, sampling gear, REM systems	£150k
ICT infrastructure & remote sensing	Modern survey data systems, drones	£100k

Total Capital Requirement: £1.2m (2026/27) → £1.5m (2028/29)

Regional Adaptation:

Isles of Scilly

Isles of Scilly IFCA has a need to invest in upgrading its patrol vessel to meet compliance with the requirements of Work Boat Code 3 in year one of the review period. It is also planning up to invest in modernised survey equipment and supporting hard/software during the review period.

Year 2026/7

Cornwall IFCA replacement of 25-year-old patrol vessel with smaller equivalent craft to delivery compliance capacity at sea, whilst meeting new coding and fuel efficiency requirements and integrating with existing modernised boarding vessel. Contribution to total projected costs £2.2m.

In year 2027/28

refit investment to ensure compliance with workboat code Isle of Scilly IFCA and Northumberland IFCA

Year 2028/29

investment in REM systems by Devon and Severn IFCA and Southern IFCA replacement of existing patrol vessel under capital renewal programme.

8. Delivering the Recommendations of the Conduct & Operations Report

This proposal directly addresses the recommendations of the IFCA Conduct and Operations Report (2018–2022) by:

1. **Enhancing evidence and intelligence capacity** through new digital and vessel infrastructure.
2. **Improving consistency and speed** in implementing management measures through shared systems.
3. **Increasing transparency** via standardised dashboards and open data publication.
4. **Professionalising the workforce** through structured national training.
5. **Supporting adaptive, evidence-led local delivery** of the FMPs.

9. Financial Summary (Indicative)

9.1 Revenue Grant

	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
New Burdens Settlement	5,500,000	5,700,000	5,900,000
Compliance and Enforcement Digital Integration (CLUE/API)	340,000	40,00000	40,000
Compliance and Enforcement Power BI Licensing	13,000	13,000	13,000
Training	75,000	77,025	79,180
MPA	522,560	536,647	551,682
HPMA	£92,256	£94,745	£97,398
Planning and Engagement	522,560	536,647	551,682
FMP	522,560	536,647	551,682
Total Estimated Requirement	£7,587,936	£7,534,711	£7,784,624

10.2 Capital Grant

Capital	1,200,000	1,300,000	1,500,000
----------------	------------------	------------------	------------------

10. Conclusion

This Spending Review proposal represents a coherent and necessary investment in the IFCA's capacity to deliver sustainable inshore fisheries management. By restoring real-term funding, modernising capital assets, integrating digital intelligence systems, and investing in workforce development, IFCA's will implement the **recommendations of the Conduct & Operations Report** and **deliver the Fisheries Management Plans locally**, ensuring a world-leading model of sustainable, adaptive, and community-led marine management.

Appendix One

New Burdens Background

In 2011, Defra's own impact assessment indicated that it would be necessary to provide £5 million to local Authorities to support the new burdens that were created because of the Marine and Coastal Access Act, 2009 (Defra, 2010). **The funding necessary to support IFCAs was cut by 40% at inception**, because of the United Kingdom government austerity programme.

In the event, £3 million of much needed new burdens funding has been provided annually (since 2011) to the local authorities across all ten IFCA districts. **This central core support has not however increased since 2011. This represents a further real-time reduction of c. 30% as a result of inflation.**

Because of both these factors, **the core funding to the Local Authorities from Defra is 70% or c.£4million less than that required (by Defra's own estimates), yet new additional duties and burdens have been and continue to be placed on IFCAs.**

Whilst many, but not all, Local Authorities have managed to increase their contributions during the last decade, these are still falling a long way behind inflation and alone are unable to pick up the extra costs associated with new duties and the expectations placed on IFCAs. This has resulted in serious real terms cuts to IFCA budgets to accommodate nationally determined costs (i.e. nationally agreed pay awards and increases in NI and pension contributions). **The long-term financial impact of the pandemic on local government finances is creating pressure to reverse any previous increases in funding to IFCAs.**

The combined effect of the reduced funding from that which was identified as being required, the increased duties placed upon the IFCAs since their creation and the effect of inflation eroding the value of the financial support provided means that **the IFCAs require significant revenue investment if the government is to deliver a "world leading system of fisheries management" whilst delivering the most ambitious environmental programme of any country on earth².** IFCA's are at the very front line of effective policy delivery through practically applied inshore fisheries and **to only account for the erosion of the value of the support provided to local authorities to deliver their new burdens because of the Marine and Coastal Access Act, an increase in the grant from £3 million to £5.1 million is required.**

² IFCAs play a key role in the delivery of the UK's Marine Strategy and Defra's Outcome and delivery plan (Defra, 2021); by improving the environment through improving ... marine wildlife and increasing the sustainability, productivity, and resilience of the ... fishing sectors. We will ensure that a world class system of inshore fisheries management develops because of the Fisheries Act, 2020. We will deliver improvements to the management of the marine environment as required by the Environment Bill and significantly contribute to the 25 Year Environment Plan (HM Government, 2018).

Appendix Two

How FTE costs are calculated and assumptions for sea patrol and road patrol.

Gross Salary: £30,749.72 (assuming existing and warranted officer / scientist)

Employer NI (13.8%): £4,242.27

Pension (20%): £6,149.94

Employment Total: £41,141.93

Training (5%): £2,057.10

IT (5%): £2,057.10

Institutional (17%): £6,999.87

Total Cost: £52,256.00

The sea patrols were calculated using cost of fuel, maintenance, crewing and a contribution to depreciation. Now that the capital funding is removed the estimate is no longer accurate as full cost recovery is necessary

The road patrols are based on an estimate of fuel, depreciation, maintenance.

From: Enquiries <enquiries@southern-ifca.gov.uk>

Sent: 24 October 2025 13:35

To: Robert Clark <Robert.clark@association-ifca.org.uk>

Cc: Pia Bateman <pia.bateman@southern-ifca.gov.uk>; Michael Williams <m.williams@devonandsevernifca.gov.uk>; Tony Tomlinson <g.tomlinson483@gmail.com>; Cllr Rob Hughes <cllrrob.hughes@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk>; Cllr P Fuller <paulfulleriw@gmail.com>

Subject: RE: Annual Subscriptions

Hi Rob,

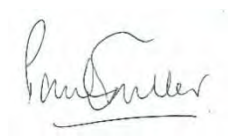
Thank you for the swift response – this is hugely helpful, and as stated in the original letter, our Membership are keen to maintain support for the AIFCA recognising the value of a national model to support the work achieved locally across the 10 IFCA's. The clarity you have provided will be of great assistance when sharing the letter of response and of course feeding into the budgetary discussions in December.

We appreciate your offer of attendance at a forthcoming meeting – perhaps we could pencil you in for 2026 -it would be great for our Members to hear from you at the point of Annual Reporting for 25/26.

On behalf of myself and Cllr Hughes,

Kind regards,

Paul



Cllr. Paul Fuller,

Chair of Southern IFCA, Isle of Wight Council.

From: Robert Clark <Robert.clark@association-ifca.org.uk>

Sent: 24 October 2025 12:36

To: Cllr P Fuller <paulfulleriw@gmail.com>; Cllr Rob Hughes <cllrrob.hughes@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk>

Cc: Pia Bateman <pia.bateman@southern-ifca.gov.uk>; Michael Williams <m.williams@devonandsevernifca.gov.uk>; Tony Tomlinson <g.tomlinson483@gmail.com>; Enquiries <enquiries@southern-ifca.gov.uk>

Subject: Re: Annual Subscriptions

Dear Cllrs

Thank you for your request for clarification. We fully recognise the challenges that local authorities are experiencing in securing levy uplifts, and we hope the information below helps provide clarity that can be shared with your constituent authorities.

New Burdens Funding and Allocation

When IFCA's were created under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, local authorities that were assessed as facing a net increase in financial responsibility received *New Burdens* grant

funding. This funding allocation is set out in Annex 2 of Defra’s publication “Allocating new burdens funding to Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities and their funding local authorities” (December 2010). The allocation was based on Option 2 of the consultation, which weighted factors such as coastline, Marine Protected Areas, and administrative complexity.

In the case of Southern IFCA, four of the six constituent local authorities (now) Dorset, (now) Bournemouth Christchurch & Poole, Hampshire and Isle of Wight—were assessed as meeting the threshold for *New Burdens* support. The remaining two constituent local authorities did not receive new burdens funding because their contributions were assessed to have either decreased or remained cost-neutral relative to their contribution to the predecessor Sea Fisheries Committee.

It is important to note that this funding was never ringfenced, consistent with central government funding policy at the time. Local authorities therefore receive the allocation within their general settlement. However, it continues to represent the central government’s recognition that the AIFCA subscription and wider IFCA duties are an accepted and ongoing national policy cost, not an optional or new discretionary spending pressure.

For clarity:

- Yes, the £13,000 referenced relates to the New Burdens allocation for AIFCA membership.
- No, each constituent authority does not “set aside” £13,000. The allocation is *to the IFCA district*, not individually per authority.
- The practical effect is simply that the local authorities that received the New Burdens grant have had their IFCA membership costs offset since 2011.

Why AIFCA Subscription Was £12,000 (2011–2021)

The Association was originally established with a modest subscription level of £12,000 per IFCA, reflecting its initial and limited remit: primarily a coordination and liaison role during IFCA establishment.

However, as the environmental, regulatory and marine policy landscape evolved, including the expansion of Marine Protected Areas, increasing statutory evidence and reporting requirements, and complex national marine planning; it became clear that a stronger collective voice and technical coordination function was required. At the request of all IFCAs, the Association undertook a governance and delivery review.

The subsequent increase to £13,000 from 2022 was the first adjustment since formation and reflected:

- The expanded policy, advocacy and technical coordination function agreed collectively by all IFCAs.
- A correction for inflationary erosion over the previous decade.

The further incremental increases to:

- £13,585 (2023)
- £13,992 (2024)

- £14,343 (2025)

simply reflect inflation-indexing of fixed operating costs, as agreed by the IFCA Chief Officers and Members Forum. There has been no real-terms increase in subscription beyond inflation; the AIFCA continues to operate on a lean and efficient basis; augmenting its subscription with project based income.

Value to Local Authorities

The AIFCA continues to:

- Represent all ten IFCA's collectively at national policy level, ensuring that Government remains aware that IFCA's are a statutory service, not discretionary coastal spending.
- Secure funding opportunities on behalf of IFCA's (e.g., access to EMFF and successor capital funds, including patrol vessel funding referenced).
- Reduce duplication of effort across regions by coordinating policy, evidence, and legal/regulatory approaches.

Without an effective national Association, each IFCA and each constituent local authority would face significantly greater costs in policy, legal engagement, and evidence development.

We trust this clarification supports your discussions with elected members. We are, of course, happy to provide a short briefing note or to attend a budget or levy discussion meeting if that would be helpful.

Many thanks

Robert Clark

Chief Officer

From: Enquiries <enquiries@southern-ifca.gov.uk>

Sent: 24 October 2025 10:09 AM

To: Robert Clark <Robert.clark@association-ifca.org.uk>; Tony Tomlinson <g.tomlinson483@gmail.com>; Michael Williams <m.williams@devonandsevernifca.gov.uk>

Cc: Cllr P Fuller <paulfulleriw@gmail.com>; Cllr Rob Hughes <cllrrob.hughes@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk>; Pia Bateman <pia.bateman@southern-ifca.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Annual Subscriptions

Hi Rob, Tony & Mike,

Thank you for your email and letter of response. Prior to sharing this with the wider ESC/General Membership, please can we seek clarification on the following matter which the letter brings to light:

"...It is of note that the cost of membership of the AIFCA is supported by a central government grant paid to IFCA's. Under the New Burdens formula, local authorities that fund Southern IFCA

receive £13,000 annually to support their contribution to the Association. The actual cost to the authority is therefore the balance of its subscription after that funding is applied, which is £1,342.42 or 0.095% of the Southern IFCA budget this financial year....”

Are you able to provide any supporting paperwork which the ESC could then subsequently share with our respective LA's on this matter, and in doing so, clarify whether this arrangement is relevant to 6 x Local Authority's or is limited to only those who received New Burdens funding (Dorset, BCP, Hants & IOW), and, whether each of the relevant LA's (6 or 4) are required to (metaphorically) ringfence 13k or whether this amount is this split between the collective (6 or 4) using the original funding formula?

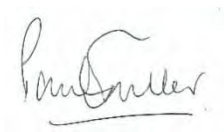
Based on your response outlined above, and recognising that you were formally the Chief Officer of Southern (which I am hoping will provide additional insight) are you able to shed some light on why the AIFCA subscriptions remained fixed at 12k between years 2011-2021 and then increased to 13k (2022), £13,585 (2023), £13,992 (2024) and £14,343 (2025) – based on the description that has been provided in the response letter, we would have expected the subscriptions to have been 13k from year 2011 onwards to align with New Burdens.

Any clarity would be welcomed to aid in imminent levy discussions with our elected Membership in late November/early December. Understandably, over recent years it has become increasingly challenging to secure any uplift in the levy contributions and we are anticipating this will also be the case in December.

We look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Kind regards,

Paul & Rob



Cllr. Paul Fuller

Chair of Southern IFCA

Isle of Wight Council

Rob Hughes

Cllr. Rob Hughes

Vice Chair of Southern IFCA

Dorset Council

Fishing for Cockles (Amendment) Byelaw – Update from MMO QA Process Paper For Information

Report by DCO Birchenough

A. Purpose

To provide an update to Members on the introductory mechanism for the Fishing for Cockles (Amendment) Byelaw, one of the outputs of the Shore Gathering Review, following an initial period of quality assurance with the Marine Management Organisation (MMO).

1.0 Introduction

- During 2022, the Southern IFCA commenced a review of management for shore gathering activities in the District, to consider where management may be required for Tranche 3 Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs), and in response to an update to the best available evidence provided by the Statutory Nature Conservation Body, Natural England, on the location and extent of designated features. In addition, the review encompassed consideration of existing legislation which relates to shore gathering activities.
- The Shore Gathering Review resulted in the drafting of the following:
 - The Shore Gathering Byelaw
 - The Fishing for Cockles (Amendment) Byelaw
 - Seaweed Harvesting Code of Conduct
- The two byelaws were Made by the Authority on 19th September 2024, following which a period of Formal Consultation was undertaken. The Authority resolved to submit the byelaws and supporting documentation to the MMO for quality assurance prior to being sent to Defra for consideration by the Secretary of State. Only once the byelaws have been ratified by the Secretary of State will they come into force.
- The two byelaws were submitted to the MMO on 17th December 2024.

2.0 Summary of Key Points

- Since the submission of the two byelaws to the MMO, Southern IFCA has received two rounds of feedback.
- Following this initial period of byelaw quality assurance, Southern IFCA are notifying stakeholders of the following change:

The Fishing for Cockles (Amendment) Byelaw will now, upon ratification by the Secretary of State, **revoke** the Southern IFCA Fishing for Cockles Byelaw rather than amend as previously proposed. This change relates to the mechanism by which the instrument is to be introduced, and **as such there are no changes to the content or underlying intentions of the Fishing for Cockles (Amendment) Byelaw**, which was formally consulted on between 17th October to 14th November 2024 as part of the wider Southern IFCA Shore Gathering Review.

3.0 Next Steps

- The above notice will be published on the Southern IFCA website for stakeholder information and awareness.
- The publication of the notice and a copy of this Authority report will be submitted to the MMO as part of the Southern IFCA response to the second round of quality assurance following the publication of this agenda.
- Southern IFCA will continue to work with the MMO through the quality assurance process prior to the submission of the byelaws to the Secretary of State.

Marine Licencing Update Paper For Information

Report by IFCO H. Churchouse

A. **Purpose**

To provide a quarterly update on Southern IFCA's input into the marine licencing process between Sep 2025 to Dec 2025

1.0 Introduction

- Marine licencing is one of the principal responsibilities of the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) to facilitate the sustainable use of the UK marine environment whilst minimising negative environmental effects and avoiding interference with navigation.
- Southern IFCA is a consultee on Marine Licence Applications (MLAs). For MLAs relevant to the Southern IFCA District, the IFCA is given 21 days to review the application and determine if a response is required to aid the MMO in its decision making and to further inform the applicant of any relevant fisheries information or considerations.
- The South Marine Plan introduces a strategic approach to planning within the inshore and offshore waters between Folkestone in Kent and the River Dart in Devon. The aim is to provide a clear, evidence-based approach, to inform marine users and regulators on where activities might take place within the Marine Plan area, allowing for national policies to be applied in a local context.
- In responding to MLAs, the IFCA must consider any advice relevant to its remit as a fisheries regulator and with regard to the South Marine Plan, taking account of the objectives and policies listed which are related to that remit. The objectives and policies of the South Marine Plan can be viewed in the plan document online - [South Marine Plan 2018.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/654441/South_Marine_Plan_2018.pdf).

2.0 Summary of Key Points

- A summary table is provided indicating the detail of any MLAs which required a response during the last quarter, outlining the nature of the MLA and the points included in the Southern IFCA response.
- There were 6 MLAs requiring a response between September 2025 and December 2025.
- There were 15 additional MLAs received by Southern IFCA where it was determined that no comment was required.

3.0 Review of Marine Consents Work: Apr 2023 to date

- Southern IFCA's work under Marine Consents focuses on the marine licencing system and the role of the IFCA as a consultee for relevant MLAs.
- This report provides an update on the MLA work to date for the 2025/26 financial year and how this compares to the previous year.

Marine Licence application timeseries:

Time Period	Comment Required	No Comment Required	% Requiring Comment	% change on MLAs requiring comment to previous year
Apr 2023 – Mar 2024	13	18	42	+86
Apr 2024 – Mar 2025	40	45	47	+208
Apr 2025 – December 2025	22	29	43	-12 Based on same period for 2024

- For the number of MLAs received per month which require a response, this equates to 1.1 per month for 2023-24 and 3.3 per month for 2024-2025.
- Where an MLA is identified as requiring a response, the time taken to review documentation associated with the MLA, compile any required data to inform the response, which may include engagement with industry and/or other bodies, and draft the response can be up to approximately 2 days of Officer time per response dependent on the complexity of the application and the level of detail required for the response.

4.0 Next Steps

- That Members receive the report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Marked M

Summary of MLA consultation requests submitted to Southern IFCA where a response was issued					
Project Name	Application No.	Application Type	Applicant	Summary of MLA	Response Points
Parkstone Yacht Club navigation and Haven depth dredge	MLA/2025/00333	MLA	Parkstone Yacht Club (Haven) Ltd Pearce Avenue Poole BH14 8EH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application for the renewal of the 10-year maintenance dredging licence at Parkstone Yacht club, within the Haven and along the approach channel. Dredging to be undertaken every three years. Material to be disposed off at Brownsea Roads site (within Poole Harbour) or Swanage dredge disposal site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on the location of the Aquaculture beds under the Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 provided, in relation to disposal of sediment at the Brownsea Roads Disposal Site. Suggestion that projects using dredge disposal sites should undertake assessments to cover cumulative/in-combination effects on local fisheries. Consultation with key stakeholders was suggested, and facilitation offered.
Marine aggregate South Coast Regional Supporting Studies – scoping study	ENG/2023/00227	ENG	Tarmac Marine Dredging Ltd Drayton House Drayton Lane Drayton Chichester PO20 2EW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enquiry seeking advice on whether proposed Regional Supporting Studies on impact for 7 aggregate dredging areas south of the Isle of Wight and within the 6nm limit, will be sufficient to inform an upcoming licence application. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed a stated position within the report that Southern IFCA believe fishing activity data from 2013, used within a previous iteration of the report, should no longer be considered relevant in isolation. Southern IFCA offered the provision of more accurate data

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Marked M

					<p>on fishing activity in the vicinity of the dredging areas, should the applicant wish it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southern IFCA welcomed the assignment of a Fisheries Liaison Officer and offered support to the FLO if it were required.
HMNB Portsmouth Maintenance Dredging and Disposal	MLA/2017/00478/6	MLA	Defence Infrastructure Organisation Building 1/150 Murrays Lane HM Naval Base Portsmouth PO1 3NH PL2 2BG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Licence variation request for an increase in quantity of material removed under the current licence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggested that projects using dredge disposal sites within the Solent should undertake assessments to cover cumulative/in-combination effects on local fisheries.
Solent Gateway 2 Project	N/A	Initial Engagement	ABPmer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial engagement sought on the potential impact to commercial and recreational fishing from the development of the Solent Gateway Site, to comprise of a new offshore jetty, dredging works to allow for marine access to the new jetty, and dredge disposal at the Nab Tower disposal site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement with the screening into the Environmental Impact Assessment of 'Indirect effects on stocks of target finfish and shellfish species arising from potential impacts of the construction and operation of the proposed Project on the ecology of fish and shellfish species present in the wider study area'. Agreement with the screening out of the EIA of 'Interference with fishing activities due to construction or operational vessel movements obstructing navigation routes to fishing grounds or disrupting/obstructing fishing activities'. Suggestion that 'Loss or restriction of access to fishing grounds' should be screened into EIA in relation to assessing the potential for indirect effects of the project on Manila clam beds within Southampton Water.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Marked M

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information provided on the inability of iVMS to display accurate data on the fishing activity of the inshore fleet before 2025 and offer of data provision on the location of fishing effort within the vicinity of the works. Consultation with key stakeholders was suggested, with the applicant made aware that stakeholders have already engaged within Southern IFCA on this upcoming licence, and facilitation offered.
Pontoon, jetty, slipway and foreshore maintenance at Marchwood Yacht Club	MLA/2025/00288	MLA	Marchwood yacht Club Maritime Avenue Marchwood Southampton SO40 4BF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application to undertake maintenance work, including pile replacement, on the pontoon, jetty, slipway and foreshore at Marchwood Yacht Club. Licence not for immediate works but seeks to allow the club to repair and maintain their assets as is required moving forward. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarification sought as to whether the various maintenance/repair works listed in the application are likely to occur at the same time at any point during the licence period, in regards to the potential for a cumulative impact of increased suspended sediment concentrations from several sets of work.
Ocean Origin – change in coordinates	MLA/2024/00086	MLA	Ocean Origin Ltd 3 Tyneham Road Church Knowle Wareham Dorset BH20 5NN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application for the establishment of a seaweed farm in Ringstead Bay, Weymouth, previously reviewed. Applicant requested a change in coordinates following consultation with another consultation body. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation that the change of coordinates does not change the Southern IFCA response sent in the previous round of consultation.

Note that references to recommendations for engagement with local fishers in responses includes both commercial and recreational sectors as required dependent on the specifics of the proposed works.

Stakeholder Groups Paper For Information

Report by DCO Birchenough

A. Purpose

To inform Members of the activity undertaken by stakeholder groups; The South Coast Fishermen's Council, The Recreational Angling Sector Group and The Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group where minutes from these meetings are available.

B. Papers

- Marked N – The South Coast Fishermen's Council Minutes – 6th August 2025 & 17th September 2025
 - Marked O – The Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group Minutes – 7th October 2025
-

1.0 Introduction

- The Authority currently provides a secretariat role for the Recreational Angling Sector Group and also the Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group.
- The Authority has given a grant of £300 to the Fishermen's Council in this financial year.
- All three groups are offered free use of a room, at the Committee's office, for meetings. Meetings are held both virtually and in person as required.
- The South Coast Fishermen's Council meets eight times per year, from 2024 the Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group meet twice per year in Spring and Autumn and the Recreational Angling Sector Group meet three times per year.

2.0 Summary of Key Points

- The following minutes are presented to the Authority for Members' consideration and to appraise them of the groups' business:
 - The minutes of The South Coast Fishermen's Council dated 6th August 2025 & 17th September 2025, Marked N
 - The minutes of The Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group dated 7th October 2025, Marked O
- The next meeting of the Recreational Angling Sector Group is due to take place in January 2026. Minutes from this meeting will be provided to the Authority at the March 2026 meeting.

3.0 Next Steps

- That Members note the report.

SOUTH COAST FISHERMEN'S COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE 38th MEETING held via Teams at 1900 on
TUESDAY 6th AUGUST 2025

PRESENT: P. Dadds - Mudeford and District FMA (Chairman)
R. Stride - Mudeford & District FMA (Secretary)
A. Bamfield - West Bay FMA

IN ATTENDANCE:
S Birchenough - DCO Southern IFCA

I APOLOGIES: J Miller, S. Postles, T. Russell, B. Pool, R. Irish (MMO), J. Morgan (MMO), G. Chittenden (MMO), H Hamlett (FishMish)
The minutes of the 38th meeting, held via Teams on 14th May 2025, were taken as read and it was agreed that they be signed as a true record.

II REGIONAL FISHERIES GROUPS

There had been no further meeting of the South RFG. A Bamfield stated that the South West RFG had met but that he had not attended. A brief perusal of the minutes had not convinced him that the meetings were effective in giving regulators a true picture of the reality of the inshore fisheries. R Stride felt that the South RFG was useful and was an opportunity to raise awareness of the issues. He lamented that only a small number of fishermen attended the meetings and urged members to attend when possible to ensure that regulators were getting the right picture. It was noted that the RFGs are now producing regular newsletters with details of consultations, grants schemes, etc. and that recordings of the meetings were also available.

The next meetings are: South on 20th August and South West on 23rd September.

III FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PLANS

Bass

R. Stride reported that the work of the Authorisations sub-group of the Bass Management Group had concluded with the production of a report containing recommendations to the BMG and DEFRA. The report would not be published at this stage and he would not be able to go into details. This is unfortunate as it limits the feedback that members could but was necessary for the time being to avoid fishermen acting on speculation as to future policy. He was still hopeful that a modest widening of the fishery to allow the bycatch of bass by non-authorized netters to be landed.

A Bamfield had attended one of the port meetings and had been disappointed that that discussion was largely confined to a limited set of questions. He noted that the discussion had been somewhat led from the floor by the interventions of an angling representative who raised concerns about alleged illegal targeting of bass in the SW. A Bamfield felt that illegal fishing needed to be tackled directly through enforcement and not by imposing further restrictions on compliant fishermen. Members noted and shared his concerns. R Stride explained that the MMO's objective in putting a short list of topics at the port meetings was to explore and verify the views that had been expressed by stakeholders at the meetings of the Authorisations sub-group.

A new sub-group, Management Measures was to convene in September to begin working through the remaining short term measures in the bass FMP.

R. Stride said that it was still not clear whether the priority of the FMP was to continue to restrict the bass fishery in the interest of stock recovery or whether the BMG should be setting out a framework for allocating additional fishing opportunities. ICES was recommending an increase in the bass catch in 2026 that would result in a reduction in the spawning stock biomass be 8.8%. Members hoped that DEFRA would not opt to increase the catch allowances for authorised vessels yet again but use any additional catching opportunities to allow the all netters to land their bass bycatch. The interests of the majority of authorised vessels would be best served by an increase in the abundance of bass. Members agreed that the Council should add its voice to that of some angling representatives on the BMG to ask that the bass harvest strategy be discussed at the next full BMG meeting in October.

Wrasse & Seabream

Members understood that the draft FMPs had been submitted to DEFRA. A formal consultation is the next stage.

IV MMO/ DEFRA MATTERS

iVMS Implementation

The secretary had received an email from the MMO clarifying that there is no requirement for a vessel with a faulty iVMS set to apply for an Authority to Sail. That procedure applies only to over 10m vessels with an electronic log book. The licence condition requires only that the vessel carry a working iVMS device. Members discussed the difficult situation a lot of fishermen with non-functioning iVMS units were in and the unsatisfactory way in which the implementation of the project was progressing.

Members learned that the consultation on trawling within offshore MPAs was ongoing. It was noted that all of the MPAs in question are outside of the 6-mile limit. There is still a potential for fishing effort to be displaced inside the limit but the 12m rule would prevent most, if not all, of the displaced vessels from fishing in the SIFCA district.

Members discussed the proposal to increase the MCRS for brown crab in the south west to 160mm for males and 150mm for female. Dorset is part of the SW region but in effect the proposal only covers Devon and Cornwall. The change will bring the crab fisheries outside the 6nm limit into line with the inshore waters, where those sizes are already in force. Although the measure is to be permanent, it is still a trial in the sense that the impact of the changes will be monitored and it may lead to further harmonisation of crab MCRS around the coast.

V SOUTHERN IFCA MATTERS

S. Birchenough reported that her team were preparing a summary of responses to the public consultation on the shared principles for Black Seabream management within MCZs (Purbeck Coast, Southbourne Rough and Poole Rocks). This would be presented to the next meeting of the TAC to consider what principles will be taken

forward. Through a mixture of methods, the level of stakeholder engagement had been high and the consultation was successful and very positive.

Members heard that the new Bottom Towed Fishing Gear byelaw had been confirmed after almost 2 years in the MMO/DEFRA process. The byelaw maintains the existing closed areas with some extensions to cover the known extent of the designated features and closes the most recent MCZs, including Southbourne Rough. The full details are available on the SIFCSA website and officers had been visiting affected vessels to upload the coordinates to their plotters where technically possible. Members welcomed the news.

S. Birchenough clarified that the Potting byelaw was still in the MMO QA process and explained what that entailed. A. Bamfield expressed his surprise at the delay, given that the byelaw was uncontroversial, generally supported by fishermen and that there was already similar schemes in place in other IFCAs. Members understood the need to be thorough but felt that the system would need to be streamlined if the engagement and confidence of fishermen is to be maintained.

VI MARINE PLANNING

BCP dredging and beach replenishment

The secretary had been notified by the Fisheries Liaison Officer that BCP Council expected to submit their proposal for dredging on the Shingles and Dolphin Sands in late August/ early September. S. Birchenough confirmed that as a statutory consultee SIFCA would be asked to comment and would contact the Council and other stakeholders when that happens. P. Dadds stressed the importance of objecting to a proposal that would have such a large impact on the marine environment and on commercial and recreational fishing.

VII SOUTH COAST SEA FISHERIES TRAINING ASSOCIATION

Three applications for new entrant training grants had been received.

- 2 new entrants from Selsey for basic sea survival
- A new entrant from Newhaven for firefighting, first aid, safety awareness and Health & Safety.

That the grants, to the total value of £870, be approved was proposed by A Bamfield, seconded by P Dadds. All in favour.

VIII NATIONAL REPRESENTATION OF INSHORE FISHERIES

The group that was hoping to further the project would be launching a simple website soon. It was intended to provide a means by which fishermen and fishermen's organisations could indicate their interest and willingness to be involved in a representative body. Members discussed the Great British Inshore Fishing Survey. A. Bamfield explained that it was being facilitated by the Lyme Bay CIC. It comprised a set of simple questions that could be answered with a yes or no with the option of adding further comments.

IX OTHER BUSINESS

It was noted that the latest round FaSS funding had already been fully taken up and was closed. Members were concerned at reports that a relatively small number of larger projects had been approved. The prospect of getting support for any new individual project seems to be very low as there are so many applications already in the pipeline.

Whilst S. Postles was not on hand to give a training update, members acknowledged that there was a lot of uncertainty regarding the provision of funding for fishermen's safety courses, the criteria for eligibility and the course content itself. They recognised his efforts in trying to find a way forward.

The secretary read an email from Hayley Hamlett, Fishermen's Mission superintendent for the SE, announcing that a Seafit event would be held in Poole on 11th September. The fishermen's memorial event organised by the Mission in May was very successful.

X ARRANGEMENTS FOR MEETINGS IN 2025. .

17 September, 29 October, 4 December.

There being no other business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and S. Birchenough for giving up her valuable time. The meeting closed at 20:23

Chairman

SOUTH COAST FISHERMEN'S COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE 384th MEETING held via Teams at 1900 on WEDNESDAY 17th SEPTEMBER 2025

PRESENT: P. Dadds - Mudeford and District FMA (Chairman)
T Russell - Poole & District FMA (Vice Chairman)
R. Stride - Mudeford & District FMA (Secretary)
S Postles - Lyme Regis FMA
J Miller - Swanage FMA
A. Bamfield - West Bay FMA

IN ATTENDANCE:
S Dell - DCO Southern IFCA

I APOLOGIES: B. Pool, R. Irish (MMO), J. Morgan (MMO), G. Chittenden (MMO), H Hamlett (FishMish)

The minutes of the 383rd meeting, held via Teams on 6th August 2025, were taken as read and it was agreed that they be signed as a true record.

II REGIONAL FISHERIES GROUPS

T Russell and R Stride had attended the South RFG on 20 August. The minutes and quota presentation had been distributed to members and there is a recording of the meeting available online. There were currently no issues with the level of catch allowances but the uptake of most quota species by the under 10m fleet had been slow. DEFRA had stated that if the quota is not taken up by the end of the year, it will not lead to a reduction next year although only part of the surplus can be carried forward (banked). Fishermen on the meeting attributed the low uptake to the activities of EU trawlers close to the 6 mile limit, and were concerned that unused quota should not be traded out to the EU fleet as it would make the situation worse.

In the discussions, DEFRA stated its determination to discourage the landing of soft crabs and prevent their use as whelk bait, a position that was generally supported. Ian Glasgow (DEFRA) had sought fishermen's views on priorities for the December negotiations with the EU. He had asked for views on a reported decline in rays. T Russell and others had reported that they had not observed a decline so far. T Russell urged members to attend the RFG meetings.

South West RFG is due to meet on 23rd September.

III FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PLANS

Bass

R Stride reported that the Management Measures sub-group of the BMG had started its work, focussing initially on the recording of bass discards. The minutes had been distributed to members. DEFRA was seeking advice on how to encourage fishermen to routinely record bass discards through the CatchApp. Some feedback had been provided by members previously through the WhatsApp group. Members discussed some of the barriers and disincentives to bycatch recording. It was generally agreed that:

- Only discards that were dead or unlikely to survive should be recorded

- Messaging should stress the value of accurate recording to improve the science and facilitate better management of the stock
- The message should come from CEFAS
- Fishermen would need some reassurance that the data would not be used to their disadvantage
- The problems with iVMS rollout and with the CatchApp itself had led to a loss of trust in the MMO. It would be necessary to build some goodwill.
- The CatchApp should be modified to enable the zero returns to be entered.

Members lamented that, with bass abundance increasing and ICES recommending a significant uplift in landings, small inshore vessels are still obliged to discard good fish. Even a modest catch allowance would be a sign of good faith. J Miller stated that at Lulworth, discards of species of interest such as bass, undulate rays and small-eyed rays were being recorded in the interest giving a true picture of their local significance.

(A Bamfield joined the meeting at 1942)

Cuttlefish

R Stride sought members' observations on the degree to which the SIFCA voluntary code of practice for cuttlefish traps was being observed. S Dell reported that the number of traps deployed had reduced in recent years. Compliance was generally good with most traps left at sea until the eggs had hatched. There were some areas of non-compliance. P Dadds attributed the reduction in trap numbers to natural wastage. Catches were low and did not allow for the replacement of gear as it came to the end of its life. Compliance was 100% at Mudeford but some traps were lost or damaged each year, mainly through the activities of trawlers. A Banfield told the meeting that West Bay fishermen had concluded that leaving the eggs to hatch was not effective. The number of eggs involved were negligible compared to the number damaged by trawling. They would prefer to see limitations put on trawling for cuttlefish so that the breeding stock can reach the spawning grounds. In the discussion that followed it was apparent that the members' experiences with egg development varied across the district and no conclusion was reached. The merits and demerits of the measures in the FMP was also discussed, concluding that no improvement in the fishery was likely in the short or medium term.

Members noted that a similar code of practice introduced under the FMP applied, inexplicably, only outside of the 6 mile limit where cuttlefish traps are not usually deployed, if at all.

IV MMO/ DEFRA MATTERS

iVMS Implementation

Members were aware that Succorfish had suspended the transmission of vessel data to the MMO pending the resolution of a dispute regarding service contracts. In the meantime, there appeared to be little progress with resolving the technical problems with some of the Succorfish iVMS units. It was noted that Devon & Severn IFCA had opted to fit an alternative make of unit to vessels in its district. S Dell pointed out that this was in order to maintain the capture of data from vessels that are required under a permit byelaw to carry iVMS, a move that would also benefit the fishermen. SIFCA did not have such a requirement and was not considering the supply of iVMS.

Members felt that it was unlikely that a statutory instrument would be introduced until the situation had been resolved, particularly as there had been a change in the ministerial team in DEFRA.

V SOUTHERN IFCA MATTERS

S Dell updated members:

- To assist stakeholders to comply with the bottom Towed Fishing Gear Bylaw, officers had continued to update the plotters of affected vessels with boundary coordinates.
- The Pot Fishing Bylaw is still in the MMO QA process
- The pre-season Solent scallop survey is underway. The work is being carried out aboard local fishing vessels in challenging weather conditions
- The trial of REM equipment and AI is ongoing. The purpose is to identify robust equipment that can be used effectively aboard different types of fishing vessel should REM become an option or requirement for certain fisheries or research projects in the future. A full report on the lessons learned will be made available in due course. However there are no plans to mandate the use of REM in the district.
- As an exception to what has been reported in the press, SIFCA has increased its enforcement work in the recreational bass fishery both at sea and on the shore. To date officers have identified more incidences of non-compliance with bass regulations in the RSA fleet than in the commercial fleet.
- The SIFCA annual report will be accompanied this year by a report to the constituent councils highlighting the work of the IFCA in their areas. These same reports will be of interest to stakeholders in those same areas.
- Members welcomed the news that Mark Cornwell, a towed gear fisherman from West Bay, has been appointed to the SIFCA committee. Mark has static gear experience and a history of collaborating with CEFAS on stock assessments and currently trialling REM for SIFCA.

VI MARINE PLANNING

BCP dredging and beach replenishment

There had been no developments since the last meeting.

VII SOUTH COAST SEA FISHERIES TRAINING ASSOCIATION

One application for a new entrant training grant had been received.

- A new entrant from Weymouth, who had previously been supported to do the Sea Survival course, was now moving on to firefighting, first aid and health & safety.

That the grant, to the total value of £425, be approved was proposed by T Russell, seconded by J Miller. All in favour, except for one abstention.

VIII NATIONAL REPRESENTATION OF INSHORE FISHERIES

R Stride reported that the website that would enable fishermen to register their interest in joining the English Inshore and Small Scale Fisheries Network was expected to go

live soon. In the meantime the results of the Great British Inshore Fisheries Survey had been presented at an event at the Houses of Parliament. He had no details to share and could not say whether the survey would further efforts to bring fishermen together in a network.

A follow up to the two social sciences workshops held in Poole and Whitby last year was planned in Newcastle on 4th to the 5th of February. An invitation had gone out for fishermen to apply for a limited number of funded vacancies. Members felt that this was a worthwhile event.

IX OTHER BUSINESS

Training Update

S Postles reported that Seafish had allocated just £135,000 to fishermen's training, including a contribution from the MCA, for the remainder of the financial year, whereafter there would be no funding available. Consequently funding for any individual was limited to £1,000 in that period. Applied to refresher and career development courses, this would not cover the full suite of courses, putting the 16.5m Skippers Certificate beyond the reach of most fishermen. Seafish is developing a new 5 day introductory course new entrants. If it proves to be suitable, by the time it has been piloted there may not be enough time left in the period to recruit candidates. In addition, Seafish insists that new entrants must hold an ENG1 medical certificate. Members were puzzled by this, given that no medical certificate is required to work on an under 10m vessel. Should a candidate go on to work on a larger vessel they would be required by law to get a medical certificate then. It was felt that these requirements and lack of funding would raise new barriers to new entrants at a time when we need to attract young people to the industry. S Postles was pessimistic about the future of fishermen's training and that of training providers

T Russell informed the meeting that the Fishermen's Mission Seafit event held in Poole had been a great success with good outcomes for the fishermen who attended.

X ARRANGEMENTS FOR MEETINGS IN 2025. .

29 October, 4 December.

There being no other business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and S. Dell for giving up his valuable time. The meeting closed at 21:10

Chairman

Hampshire, Dorset, and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group

Autumn 2025 Meeting Notes

Date held: 7th October 2025

Attendees: Louise MacCallum (LM), Megan Roberts (MR), Peter Tinsley (PT) (Chair), Chelsea Perrins (CP) and Hester Churchouse (HC)

1) Welcome and Apologies

PT welcomed the Members of the group to the Spring 2025 meeting of the Dorset, Hampshire, and Isle of Wight Marine Conservation Group. Apologies received from Wez Smith (RSPB), Alison Fowler (River Hamble Harbour Authority), Julie Sims (RSPB), Alice Hall (University of Plymouth), and Matt Doggett.

2) Minutes of the Last Meeting

Minutes of the Autumn 2024 meeting received and no changes made during meeting. Attendees informed of one grammatical change made by HC.

Following information provided in Spring meeting, PT provided an update on the Purbeck puffins. Attendees were informed Dorset Wildlife Trust saw no new puffins this year, and are looking into installing an artificial burrow structure to try support the population, who could have no other incentive to return next year.

3) Current Focus and Activities

Langstone Harbour Authority (MR)

Attendees informed that the Harbour Authority is working on updating their Environmental Management Plan for the first time in 30 years. A number of relevant organisations are being consulted in early stages, including Southern IFCA and the Solent Seascapes Project. Attendees informed that the Environmental Management Plan is currently in very early stages and updating is likely to be a focus for the next 5 years, including making any necessary changes, as well as additional duties/targets to be added to the plan. Intention that it will form a good action plan of tangible things the Harbour Authority can work on over the next few years, with areas to focus on, and a plan to reach the targets.

Solent Seascapes Project (LM)

Attendees informed that Blue Marine is working on creating another oyster reef, in the Sussex IFCA area of Chichester Harbour. Currently in a process with the MMO to get the necessary licence.

Attendees were reminded of Solent Seascapes Project's (SSP) work to create a Seascape Recovery Plan, co-designing habitat pressure relief with stakeholders through management and conservation, with the aim of bringing existing habitat and species into better health. LM provided two updates on the project since the last meeting, the release of the Solent data

explorer and work finalising the vision for how people want the Solent to look in 50 yrs time and the avenues to explore to improve its current status. Workshops on the Seascape Recovery Plan have produced a list of outcomes and pressure relieving factors for the Solent, which the Projects Working Group is refining. The next step is to take this shortlist to the stakeholder community for further development. The Data Explorer is accessible to everybody via the SSP website, and the SSP is looking for any additional datasets that other organisations may hold, that said organisations are happy to be made public. SSP is working with ABPmer to create a form that people can use to inquire whether their data could be included.

Action: Group members to consider whether their organisation hold any relevant data, not currently on the Solent Data Explorer, that can be made publicly available, that would positively increase the information held on the resource.

Additionally, attendees were informed of potential for the SSP to be used as a pilot for 'Marine Recovery Strategies', and that SSP has been approved by NE for use as blueprint for marine LNRs, which the Project is hopeful could give the SSP statutory teeth. Attendees were also informed of the imminent release of a new SSP film about seagrass restoration.

Dorset Wildlife Trust (PT)

Attendees informed that PT has been looking for evidence of historic oyster reef growth within Poole Bay, following among other things the presence of a large midden of oyster shells under one of the quays in Poole Harbour, all with defined shells which are a different shape to those recently recorded as existing there. Dating of some of the shells, found on Studland beach, returned dates of 2,000 to 3,000 years old, suggesting pre-roman. From local university projects looking at wrecks/artificial reefs in Poole Bay, it is known that beneath the top layer of sediment there is an oyster shell layer, likely from historic oyster reefs in the area. Attendees informed of the intention to work with Historic England/universities to take samples from this layer and get the Poole historic oyster reef dated.

HC sought clarification as to whether the oyster midden found within Poole Harbour is from a natural population or anthropogenic influence. PT informed that the most likely scenario is the oyster were collected from outside the Harbour and then deposited within it.

River Hamble Harbour Authority (HC on behalf of Alison Fowler)

At the Hamble Estuary Partnership meeting in July, received an interesting presentation from Dom at the EA on the Hamble's fish populations between 2007-2024, the link for which is provided for those interested.

Minutes/ summary of his presentation: <https://documents.hants.gov.uk/Hamble/Minutes-HambleEstuaryPartnership-110725.pdf>

Presentation: <https://documents.hants.gov.uk/Hamble/Hamble-estuarine-fish-monitoring2007-2024.pdf>

HC added that Dom included some interesting information on life history explanations as to why certain trends were seen in species abundance through the year.

4) Southern IFCA Update

HC provided an update on the SIFCA surveys that have been undertaken since the last meeting, covering the pre-season Solent Scallop Survey (September 2025), the Poole Harbour Dredge Midseason survey (August 2025), and all four sites of the Small Fish Survey (June 2025). Attendees were informed that reports would be available following in November or February depending on the survey, and to inform HC if any reports were of interest to members.

HC provided an update on the progress of FMPs relevant to the SIFCA district, which consists of the King Scallop Implementation Group and Bass Management Group making their meeting notes public, links available if either interests members:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bass-management-group-meeting-minutes>; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/king-scallop-implementation-group-meeting-minutes>. Additionally, the 5 front runner FMPs (Bass, Channel demersal non-quota, crab & lobster, whelk, & king scallop) have released infographics and short videos explaining where each FMPs has got to, links available below:

- <https://defrafp.blog.gov.uk/2025/08/06/bass-fmp-explained-goals-benefits-and-updates/>
- <https://defrafp.blog.gov.uk/2025/08/13/channel-demersal-nqs-fmp-explained-goals-benefits-and-updates/>
- <https://defrafp.blog.gov.uk/2025/09/17/crab-and-lobster-fmp-explained-goals-benefits-and-updates/>
- <https://defrafp.blog.gov.uk/2025/07/23/whelk-fmp-explained-goals-benefits-and-updates/>
- <https://defrafp.blog.gov.uk/2025/07/30/king-scallop-fmp-explained-goals-benefits-and-updates/>

HC informed attendees that Sussex IFCA released a new Hand Gathering byelaw in the Spring but otherwise have no other updates. The group was also informed of statements released on Devon & Severn IFCA's webpage about providing fishers affected by Succorfish & MMO iVMS disputes with alternative vessel monitoring devices free of charge. This is relevant to the Devon & Severn district as they have a condition within their Mobile Fishing Permit Conditions that all vessels between 6.99m and 15m operating under a Category One Mobile Fishing Permit must have a fully functional device that transmits data to the UK VMS Hub.

LM sought clarification that the root of the issue was a disagreement between the MMO and Succorfish. HC confirmed that the nature of the disagreement between the MMO and Succorfish centres on data protection issues. As a result, Succorfish have stopped uploading iVMS data to the central database. Discussion around the current legal requirement for fishing vessels under 12m to have iVMS and whose jurisdiction this sits in was held.

5) Any Other Business

Confirm Chair for following meeting.

Given level of attendance and presence of those who have previously chaired, HC stated she would make a call for chair in meeting invite.

MCG Meetings Format

Discussion with attendees around how to improve content/attendance at HDIoW MCG meetings. Position from LM of importance of meeting for contributing to IFCA process, and suggestion that attendance could be encouraged through further Member involvement in the IFCA. Important to recognise that Members want to be able to drive change and feel their voice contributes to SIFCA work. Suggestion from LM that input process applied in the SIFCA Recreational Angling Group and commercial fishermen's groups are mirrored across into the MCG. **Action** for SIFCA officers to explore input of other SIFCA lead groups. Support from MR on importance of Members feeling the MCG is an ability to contribute and have their voice heard, while also staying abreast of SIFCA work. Discussion with attendees around the frequency of MCG meetings, with feelings that dropping to one meeting a year/scheduling meetings as matters arise increases the potential of loss of interest if the annual meeting is missed, but that increasing the number of meetings per year may make attendance more difficult. Question raised as to whether other IFCAs hold an MCG equivalent, and if so, what their process is. **Action** for SIFCA officers to investigate whether other IFCAs run an MCG equivalent, and how. Following from the discussion, **Actions** raised for SIFCA officers to determine the scope of member input into SIFCA and to seek input from members on perceived value of the MCG.

6) Date (and Location) of the Next Meeting

Tuesday 7th April 2026, 14:00 – 16:00 on Microsoft Teams

Actions

#	Description	Responsibility
1	Determine whether member organisations hold data relevant to the Solent Seascapes Data Explorer that would enhance the resource and is not already an available layer.	All relevant Members
2	Investigate feedback/input process of other SIFCA run sector groups.	SIFCA Officers
3	Investigate whether other IFCAs run an MCG equivalent, and how.	SIFCA Officers
4	Understand MCG input into SIFCA work.	SIFCA Officers
5	Seek input on members on perceived value of MCG.	SIFCA Officers

Meeting Dates & Venues 2026

Report by the Facilities & Administration Officer

A. Purpose

Following consideration of the draft dates by Members in June 2025, this paper confirms these dates in addition to the location of Authority meetings for 2026.

B. Recommendation

a) That Members note the confirmed dates and locations.

1. Background

In accordance with Standing Orders (paragraph 2), the quarterly meeting of The Authority shall be held in the months of March, June, September (AGM) and December.

In accordance with Standing Orders (paragraph 22), the quarterly meeting of The Executive Sub-Committee shall be held in the months of March, June September and December.

In accordance with Standing Orders (paragraph 28), the quarterly meeting of The Technical Advisory Sub-Committee shall be held in the months of February, May, August and November (AGM).

In accordance with Standing Orders (paragraph 37), the quarterly meeting of The Audit and Governance Sub-Committee shall be held in the months of March, June, September and December.

In accordance with Standing Order (paragraph 10), the meetings of The Authority shall be held at venues throughout the District.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

AUTHORITY MEETINGS 2026

Technical Advisory Sub Committee	5 th Feb 2026
Audit and Governance Sub-Committee (virtual)	10 th Mar 2026
Executive Sub-Committee (virtual)	10 th Mar 2026
The Authority	12 th Mar 2026

Technical Advisory Sub-Committee	7 th May 2026
Audit and Governance Sub-Committee (virtual)	9 th Jun 2026
Executive Sub Committee (virtual)	9 th Jun 2026
The Authority	11 th Jun 2026

Technical Advisory Sub-Committee	20 th Aug 2026
Audit and Governance Sub-Committee (virtual)	15 th Sep 2026
Executive Sub-Committee (virtual)	15 th Sep 2026
The Authority (AGM)	17 th Sep 2026

Technical Advisory Sub-Committee (AGM)	5 th Nov 2026
Scrutiny and Governance Sub-Committee (virtual)	8 th Dec 2026
Executive Sub-Committee (virtual)	8 th Dec 2026
The Authority	10 th Dec 2026

The meeting of **The Authority** starts at 14:00 and will be held at various venues across the Southern IFCA District.

The Authority	12 th Mar 2026	Shire Hall Museum, High St West, Dorchester DT1 1UY
The Authority	11 th Jun 2026	Winchester, venue TBC
The Authority	17 th Sep 2026	IOW, venue TBC
The Authority	10 th Dec 2026	Poole, Venue TBD

The **Executive Sub-Committee** starts at 14:00 and is held virtually.

The **Technical Advisory Sub Committee** starts at 14:00 and is held at the Southern IFCA Office.

The **Audit & Governance Sub-Committee** starts at 10:00 and is held virtually.