

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED A

Minutes of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) held in the meeting room at the Southern IFCA office in Poole at **14:00 on 4th May 2023**

Present

Dr Antony Jensen	(Chairman, MMO Appointee)
Mr Richard Stride	(Vice Chairman, MMO Appointee)
Ms Louise MacCallum	(MMO Appointee)
Mr Gary Wordsworth	(MMO Appointee)
Mr Neil Hornby	(MMO Appointee)
Ms Pia Bateman	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Deputy Chief Officers (DCOs) Ms Sarah Birchenough and Mr Sam Dell, Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officers (IFCOs) Ms Emily Condie, Ms Liberty Cast and Mr Dominic Parry and Project Officers (POs) Ms Celie Mullen and Ms Chelsea Perrins were also present. Co-opted Member Ms Elisabeth Bussey-Jones was also in attendance.

Mr Gavin Black (Natural England) and Mr Edward Baker (MMO) attended the meeting virtually.

Dr A Jensen opened the meeting by inviting all attendees to introduce themselves. Members were informed that the meeting was being recorded for the purposes of producing the meeting minutes.

Apologies

179. Apologies for absence were received from Dr Simon Cripps (MMO Appointee), Mr Phil Rudd (Environment Agency), Ms Rachel Irish (MMO) and Mr Ted Legg (MMO Appointee).

Declarations of interest

180. The following pecuniary interests were declared: Mr G Wordsworth (7 and 8). The following non-pecuniary interests were declared: Mr Richard Stride (6), Mr Neil Hornby (7, 8 and 12).

Minutes

181. Members considered the Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd February 2023 and following an amendment to paragraph 5 of section 174, these were confirmed and signed. It was confirmed that Recommendation 175 was completed.

Guest Speaker: MMO, Lyme Bay Sole Fishery Consultation

182. Members received a virtual presentation from Mr Edward Baker of the MMO, on the MMO Lyme Bay Sole Fishery Consultation. DCO Dell provided Members with background on the involvement of the Southern IFCA in this matter to date including sitting on a steering group set up to investigate issues relating to Lyme Bay sole and involvement in joint patrols with the MMO.

Dr A Jensen thanked Mr E Baker for an interesting and informative presentation and invited any questions. Dr A Jensen commented that it appeared the fishery itself was quite healthy and it was more about being able to accommodate and balance different gear types to avoid conflict. Mr E Baker commented that the only area of concern for the stock was a low recruitment in 2021 in VIIe and the TAC for 2022 having decreased by 23% to account for this. He commented that this, combined with the decrease in the size of sole being caught by

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED A

trawlers may be an emerging issue but that it is very difficult to attribute causality to the data. The MCRS is one topic of the consultation with potential links to be made with the Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species FMP.

Mr R Stride raised that the original issue in Lyme Bay had stemmed from local boats having a code of practice to help limit individual fishing effort but that it was felt that visiting boats were not necessarily following that. He stated that it is hoped an outcome of the consultation would be protection for those local boats. He queried the increase in CPUE on the basis of an increase in effort and whether the quantity of nets fished could be obtained from catch data to better inform quantification of effort. Mr E Baker responded that catch data was only available for 2022 so there is no back reference which makes evaluation of net fishing activity more difficult, days per sea for trawlers makes this calculation possible for that gear type. He stated that the MMO were open to the outcomes of the consultation in terms of potential ways of moving forward.

Mr E Baker stated that the current voluntary code of conduct does not extend as far out to sea as the current extent of fixed net activity, with more activity outside of closed trawl areas due to closed areas being less productive for sole. He asked Members whether they were able to provide any insight on this, there was no information which Members could provide on this point.

Ms L MacCallum asked about the market for sole. Mr E Baker responded that the majority is taken abroad, sold through the Brixham Trawler Agents.

The CEO asked how the development of the consultation is considering the objective of equal access under The Fisheries Act 2020. Mr E Baker responded that the MMO have considered that they cannot limit access to the area to only local vessels, the same opportunity to fish in Lyme Bay must be afforded to all vessels. He stated that the objectives of The Fisheries Act 2020 needed to be balanced but that there wasn't currently direction on how to prioritise those objectives.

DCO Dell commented that IFCOs would be attending port drop-in sessions on the consultation. He also informed Members that any resulting management outcomes would be explored by the MMO through licence variations rather than via IFCA management or enforcement. DCO Dell reminded the Members that Southern are proposing gear marking regulations under the proposed Net Fishing Byelaw and that this has also been reflected in the consultation document.

Mr E Baker informed Members that the MMO has committed to undertaking a more detailed environmental assessment as well as a socio-economic assessment alongside the consultation. Natural England are helping with the environmental assessment, Mr E Baker asked what the Members opinions were on implementing management outside of MPAs as it was the impression that the majority of IFCA management focused on inside of MPAs. The CEO responded that the IFCA undertakes district-wide management, inside and outside of MPAs.

PROGRESS REPORTS

183. Chief Executive Officer Updates

The CEO informed Members that the updates provided at the TAC meetings going forward will be aligned with the scope of the TAC as given in the Standing Orders to avoid repetition between updates given at TAC meetings and the Authority meeting. Updates will relate to

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED A

matters regarding statutory and non-statutory interventions, fisheries management and policy, consultations, and aquaculture.

The CEO outlined that there would be a rolling agenda item on the TAC agenda for Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs) which will be delivered by the FMP Project Officer. Marine licensing updates have also moved to the TAC agenda from the Authority agenda.

The CEO covered the recent oil spill incident in Poole Harbour outlining the IFCA remit for the wild fisheries, aquaculture, recreational fisheries and hand gathering but emphasising that the IFCA is not the responsible authority for determining if these fisheries should be open or closed in response to a pollution incident. This duty sits with the Food Standards Agency (FSA). Southern IFCA worked closely with BCP Council Environmental Health Officers to provide their expertise on Poole Harbour to Cefas and the FSA. The priority following the incident was related to shellfish fisheries, with aquaculture as an active activity at the time being the main priority as the wild dredge fishery was closed at the time of the incident, fish species were of less concern due to their ability to more readily metabolise any contaminants. The incident underwent debate at the House of Lords and resulted in questions being raised at Parliament, the work of all agencies involved including Southern IFCA was recognised at that forum. The CEO emphasised the impact that the incident had on the business-as-usual function of the IFCA and extended thanks to the DCOs and the wider team, who worked long hours during a sustained two-week period.

The CEO outlined consultations that were taking place. Members were informed that the outcomes of the MMO consultation on a closed season for the Vlll and Lyme Bay king scallop dredge fisheries had been published and concluded that for Vlll for UK and EU vessels >10m the closed season would be from 1st July to 30th September and for Lyme Bay for vessels >12m in length for the same time period. The closure will be enacted through a licence variation. The CEO also covered that there had been an MMO consultation on bottom towed fishing gear in offshore MPAs, the outcomes of this consultation are yet to be published. The CEO also referenced the MMO Lyme Bay Sole Fishery Consultation which is to run until 28th May 2023. The Government is also currently consulting on proposed measures to ban industrial fishing for sand eels in UK waters which closes on 29th May 2023.

The CEO spoke about the recent Government launch of the Net Zero Growth Plan, it was outlined that the Plan is mainly related to terrestrial habitats but that there are two marine blue carbon habitats referenced; saltmarsh and seagrass, and their potential contributions to Net Zero ambitions. The CEO outlined how current workstreams are related to these habitats and how proposed management by Southern IFCA is aiming to contribute to their protection.

The CEO covered two species specific related matters. It was outlined that information relating to bass would be covered in a later agenda item. The second species was spurdog, which as of 1st April is now a species which is permitted to be caught. The species is not subject to a targeted fishery within the district but has been prohibited for the past five years with a determination that stocks have now recovered to the point where landings can be supported again.

The CEO informed Members of a project that the AIFCA were involved in called 'Catchwise', described as ground-truthing new survey for recreational sea fishing, taking place across England and Wales in 2023 and 2024. Developed by the Angling Trust and Cefas in conjunction with the recreational sea angling community, with the AIFCA sitting on the project steering group. The main aim is to improve the recognition of sea angling's value to coastal communities and inform relevant fisheries management decisions as a result. The project is

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED A

asking for persons who work in the sector to be shore survey gatherers to help collect data for the project, positions are paid, and more detail is available on the project website.

Resolved

184. That Members note the updates.

185. Deputy Chief Executive Officer Updates

DCO Birchenough updated Members that on 3rd April 2023 the Net Fishing Byelaw has finished the MMO QA process and has been passed from the MMO to Defra for consideration by the Secretary of State. The MMO had reviewed the Byelaw and supporting documentation and had recommended that the Secretary of State confirms the Byelaw. There were no substantial changes made to the Byelaw as a result of the MMO QA process. Defra have indicated that the Byelaw has been received but there is not a timeframe for confirmation.

For the Pot Fishing Byelaw, Southern IFCA submitted a response to the first round of QA by the MMO on 10th January 2023. On 28th March 2023, the MMO sent correspondence that there is a delay in the MMO legal team which has prevented them sending us any further rounds of QA, as of 19th April 2023 this is still the case. It is understood that this is due to a capacity issue rather than the content of the Byelaw.

The DCOs have been working with IFCOs across both teams to develop a process and materials for the implementation of these byelaws to allow the team to be prepared ahead of any decisions to confirm either the Net Fishing Byelaw or Pot Fishing Byelaw.

Resolved

186. That Members note the update.

ITEMS FOR DECISION

187. Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023

DCO Birchenough gave Members an overview of the development of the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 (the Byelaw). It was explained that the background of the review started in 2020, primarily as a review of spatial management in response to the designation of Tranche 3 Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs), with bottom towed fishing gear (BTFG) being identified as a priority for management through the outcomes of MCZ Assessments on T3 sites. In addition, an updated evidence base was received in 2020 from Natural England providing updates on the location and extent of designated and supporting features of MPAs and wider sensitive habitats outside MPAs.

DCO Birchenough outlined that all required MPA Assessments had been completed for the sites covered by the Byelaw and that consultation on these assessments had been sought and received from Natural England. A BTFG review was formally commenced with a Members Working Group to consider management requirements on the basis of the assessment outcomes.

In August 2021 the TAC agreed to proceed the review to Stage 2 – draft measures, with three initial drivers. On this basis an informal consultation was held, and Members agreed to move to Stage 3 – draft byelaw. DCO Birchenough outlined that in 2023 the Government's Environment Improvement Plan 2023 was introduced which identified overall and interim goals for the Government to contribute to global aspirations for protection of the marine environment. For the IFCAs, as an appropriate regulator, this included an interim goal to strengthen MPA

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED A

protections by 2024 which required management measures for all Southern IFCA MPAs to be in place by this 2024 deadline. DCO Birchenough outlined that this had resulted in a prioritisation of workstreams and the proposal to adopt a phased approach to the management of BTFG which was agreed by Members on the adoption of the Research and Policy Team Plan for 2023-2024 at the Authority meeting in March 2023.

Members worked under the Phased Approach to develop a set of principles to underpin the definition of spatial closed areas under the Byelaw. DCO Birchenough provided an overview of these principles. DCO Birchenough outlined the byelaw package consisting of the Byelaw, an Impact Assessment and a Management Intentions Document and explained the contents of each including the differences in spatial area closed between the current BTFG Byelaw 2016 and the BTFG Byelaw 2023.

DCO Birchenough informed Members about the process following this meeting should Members agree to the recommendations and invited Members to consider the byelaw package and provide any comment.

Mr N Hornby queried areas in the Byelaw which currently closed under the BTFG Byelaw 2016 but were proposed to be re-opened and also asked for more clarity on the potential impact to the fishing industry including points of displacement and considering what fishing activity occurred where, what the level of pressure being alleviated and therefore environmental benefit being afforded would be from the proposed prohibited areas. DCO Birchenough responded that the principles which had been developed as part of the review were designed to ensure that management decisions were made consistently across the district without changes made on site-specific considerations. One of the principles, developed in line with the IFCA's legal duties, was that management is feature-based with the incorporation of buffers. It was discussed that this approach may not have been taken when previous iterations of the BTFG Byelaw had been developed in 2016. DCO Birchenough discussed the difficulty in valuing the BTFG fisheries based on the data that is available from MMO landings data and that as a result, displacement cannot be quantified. DCO Birchenough outlined the process that had been followed in order to make an estimation of the potential cost to the fishing industry, as captured in the Impact Assessment. Mr N Hornby identified that further information may be available through the consultation process.

Ms L MacCallum stated that there are currently areas within certain sites, using Langstone Harbour as an example, where not all the mapped designated features are covered by proposed prohibited areas. It was also queried how confident the Southern IFCA was that socioeconomics did not need to be taken into account. DCO Birchenough outlined that one of the principles defined that for SPAs and the Solent Maritime SAC the outcome of relevant assessments would be followed which was that not all of the designated features required protection in order to ensure site integrity but, good examples of those habitats would be included in prohibited areas, maintaining those areas which had been defined for the BTFG Byelaw 2016. The CEO directed Members to the relevant section of the Management Intentions document which outlined Southern IFCA's legal duties in relation to the consideration of socioeconomics under Phase 1 of the review.

Ms E Bussey-Jones queried whether any of the areas which were proposed to be re-opened from the BTFG Byelaw 2016 would be likely to be closed again following the considerations under Phase 2 of the BTFG review. DCO Birchenough explained that this was unlikely as there was no mapped feature present in those areas, and that if there was this would have been included under the current phase. It was explained that Phase 2 would also be looking at sensitive features therefore with no feature present it was unlikely that these areas would be identified for management under Phase 2. Mr N Hornby queried whether there was enough

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED A

of a benefit to warrant opening these areas and whether they could be left closed as there would be no additional loss to the industry from doing that as they are already closed. The CEO commented that under Phase 2 there would be an opportunity to consider the socioeconomic value of the areas under discussion, and therefore ascertain a benefit of having them opened or closed. It was raised that the potential of opening and closing these areas between the two phases could be problematic for any environmental protection afforded by those areas. Mr R Stride also added that it is likely that some of those areas had become areas which static gear fishers relied on in the absence of BTFG and by re-opening those areas there was the potential for conflict between gear types.

Ms E Bussey-Jones queried whether the BTFG Byelaw 2016 could be revoked only in part in so much as it affected any areas proposed to be managed under the BTFG Byelaw 2023 which would allow existing closed areas under the BTFG Byelaw 2016 that were proposed to be re-opened by the BTFG Byelaw 2023 to be maintained.

Ms E Bussey-Jones raised a point related to the review section of the Byelaw and what the intention of this provision in the Byelaw was. DCO Birchenough explained that part of the IFCA Byelaw Making Guidance provided by Defra was that byelaws should either contain a sunset clause or have the ability to be reviewed.

Mr R Stride queried the definition under the Byelaw of BTFG being 'inboard and above the sea' when a vessel is transiting through a prohibited area and asked whether it was necessary to have both 'inboard' and 'above the sea' in that definition. DCO Birchenough explained that this definition mirrored that in the current BTFG Byelaw 2016, that it had been discussed with the Compliance & Enforcement Team in terms of enforceability and that it was felt that, as the definition had been working there was not a need to change from what the fishers are currently used to.

Mr R Stride also raised a point in relation to the extension of a prohibited area outside of an MPA where a feature crosses a boundary. He queried that if the aim was to protect a feature, then are the MPA boundaries inaccurate. Using seagrass as an example, Dr A Jensen felt that an extension of that feature outside the boundary was a sign of successful conservation management inside the MPA and therefore that extended feature should be protected. Mr R Stride commented that for features which extend outside of an MPA, then management of that feature, outside the boundary should consider socioeconomics, with the main concern being around MCZ sites. Mr R Stride also commented that stakeholders are told that one of the benefits of MPAs is the ability for improvements spilling over to adjacent areas, however if those areas are then also not able to be accessed by fishers, then that benefit cannot be realised.

The MCZ designation process was discussed, with the point made that it had been the intention of this process that suitable areas would be identified which held certain features and habitats but also minimised the socioeconomic impact on stakeholders. It was raised that if the entirety of a feature had required protection, then it would have been assumed that the MCZ boundary would have been drawn to encompass the whole feature. The CEO commented that there may be a risk of not being able to meet the Conservation Objectives for a site if only part of the feature inside the boundary is protected and invited Natural England's view on this.

Mr G Black from Natural England outlined that in theory it is possible to alter an MPA boundary but that in practice it is a rare event, he commented that for features within an MPA to recover to a point where they are extending outside the boundary of the MPA is also not common. Mr

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED A

G Black provided information on different types of habitats and the difference between static and more movable habitats likely to require different considerations.

Mr G Black raised a point in relation to the best available evidence. He commented that Natural England are happy to provide the data that is available to them but raised the point that there may be additional evidence available which Natural England are unable to gather given resource constraints and that for other industries, the onus would be on the applicant/industry concerned to gather together that evidence. Dr A Jensen commented that in his view the IFCA was managing on behalf of the fishing industry rather than being the relevant industry itself and that the IFCA does not have the resources to gather the kind of data which is being discussed and the fishing industry does not have the financial resources to employ companies to undertake scientific work. He also commented that the fishing industry exists under a different legislative regime than for example terrestrial development. Members discussed the different approaches that could be taken in the development of evidence.

Members discussed the Government targets under the Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 and it was queried what the outcome would be if the Southern IFCA did not meet the 2024 target for MPA management. The CEO outlined that there would need to be a strong rationale which would need to be discussed with Defra as to the reasons why that deadline could not be met.

The CEO asked Members how they would like to proceed with areas under the BTFG Byelaw 2016 which are proposed to be re-opened, taking into account Members concerns with this aspect of the proposals. Mr N Hornby outlined that the approach needed to be transparent. The DCOs explained that the consultation which would occur if this Byelaw were made by the Authority would be a Formal Consultation therefore specific questions would not be posed but the Byelaw and all supporting documentation would be provided for stakeholders to consider and respond to. It was also confirmed that the outcomes of the Formal Consultation would come back to the TAC for consideration and that amendments could be made at that point.

The Chair invited Members to indicate if they were in favour of the recommendation; Dr A Jensen, Mr R Stride, Mr G Wordsworth, Ms L MacCallum and Mr N Hornby were all in favour.

Resolved

188. a) Provide comment on the draft Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 and Supporting Documentation:

- i. The draft Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023
- ii. The draft BTFG 2023 Management Intentions Document
- iii. The draft BTFG 2023 Impact Assessment

b) In accordance with IFCA Byelaw Guidance, Members agreed to formally notify Authority Members and the Secretary of State of the intention to make the Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Byelaw 2023 at the Authority meeting on 8th June 2023.

Recommend

189. That Officers consider options for the areas which are proposed to be reopened under the 2023 Byelaw and report back to the Authority.

190. Annual review of the Poole Harbour Several Order Management Plan (2023 update)

DCO Birchenough informed Members that the management associated with The Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 was required to be in line with a Management Plan which

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED A

accompanies the Order. The Southern IFCA is required to undertake an annual review of the Management Plan and publish an updated version on the website. If there are any significant changes required, then interested parties must be notified and take account of any representations received on that basis. The Management Plan takes into account the management of leases, the Habitats Regulations Requirements and the IFCA's duties under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

The 2023 review of the Management Plan, there were two inconsequential changes identified, therefore interested parties were not required to be notified. DCO Birchenough outlined that the updates were in relation to providing information on survey work on Pacific oysters and updates from Defra on their national position on Pacific oysters.

Due to a pecuniary interest, Mr G Wordsworth was unable to vote on the matter. All remaining Members were in favour of the Recommendation.

Resolved

- 191. a)** That Members approve the 2023 updates to the Poole Harbour Several Order Management Plan
b) That Members approve the above-named document for publication on the Southern IFCA website.

Recommended

- 192.** That the CEO confirm whether the above Recommendations is to be upheld following exploration of the Southern IFCA Standing Orders and the Local Government Act 1972, regarding the definition of 'present' and its relation to the specified quorum and report back to the Authority.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

193. Poole Harbour Oil Spill Incident

DCO Dell provided Members with an update on Southern IFCA's response to the Poole Harbour Oil Spill Incident, focusing on the operational response. On 26th March a leak was detected in a pipeline owned by Perenco and a major incident was declared with Southern IFCA contacted by Poole Harbour Commissioners requesting assistance including the use of FPV Endeavour and the drone. IFCO Officers worked with Oil Spill Response Ltd. personnel between 27th March and 30th March to help carry out Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Techniques (SCATs) using the drone for aerial surveillance and FPV Endeavour to reach remote parts of the Harbour.

Southern IFCA worked closely with BCP Council, Cefas and the FSA to help coordinate a shellfish sampling program to test multiple shellfish species to help inform the FSA position on harvesting and marketing of shellfish for aquaculture and the wild fisheries.

DCO Dell outlined the current situation and advice provided, in that fishing and netting for fish within the Harbour is able to take place providing that activities avoid any areas of the Harbour which are obviously contaminated with oil, which is now mainly contained to the spill site. Any fish found to be dead, dying or visibly contaminated with oil residue should not be consumed or marketed. Aquaculture areas have been open since 20th April, wild shellfish beds remain closed, sampling has been undertaken to inform advice on these areas with results expected this week. This advice will inform the dredge fishery activity, due to start on 25th May, and at this time hand gathering shellfish from the intertidal should not take place until the results have been received and advice issued.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED A

DCO Dell informed Members that Southern IFCA has committed significant time and resource to date to support the initial and ongoing incident. An account of this is currently being prepared with a view of submitting as a claim to seek remuneration of costs. The DCOs thanked the IFCOs involved, their commitment shown has been exemplary and feedback from Poole Harbour Commissioners and other authorities was that the knowledge and assets held by the IFCA were key in helping the operation progress without delay. The Incident Commander passed on thanks to the IFCA.

Dr A Jensen added his thanks as Chair of the TAC to all those involved stating that there had been nothing but positive comments on Southern IFCA's work related to the incident. Mr G Wordsworth also extended his thanks and stated that the IFCA did an excellent job in relation to the incident along with other partners and commented that the oil spill response plan which was in place for the Harbour had worked and been implemented successfully. He commented that the efforts of Southern IFCA and BCP Council had helped initiate the FSA response in a timely manner. Ms L MacCallum and Mr R Stride echoed the thanks to the IFCA staff.

Mr R Stride queried whether costs could be recovered. DCO Dell informed Members that there is active work ongoing in this regard and that the IFCA had received the forms to submit such a claim.

Resolved

194. That Members note the update.

195. 2023 Survey Program

DCO Birchenough updated Members on the survey work which had been undertaken by the Southern IFCA in the spring, consisting of a bivalve and scallop survey in The Solent and a bivalve survey in Poole Harbour. The surveys were required to be completed over a tight time scale this year due to bad weather preventing them taking place when originally scheduled. DCO Birchenough extended her thanks to the IFCOs and POs for their flexibility and willingness to adapt to undertake the survey work in a short space of time.

The surveys which have been completed include the Solent Scallop Survey which looks at the population of King Scallop in the Solent, the spring surveying informing a post-fishing season view of the stocks, the Solent Bivalve Survey, which is conducted in Southampton Water, Portsmouth Harbour and Langstone Harbour to look at populations of commercially important bivalve species, again as a post-fishing season survey. Both surveys will be conducted again in the autumn to look at a pre-fishing season perspective. The annual Poole Bivalve Survey is one of the Southern IFCA's most established surveys with seven years of data under the current methodology. In all cases CPUE and length frequency data is collected and time series datasets are being built which will help inform management decisions for the fisheries.

A new survey was also undertaken looking at whelk populations across the district as part of the Whelk Monitoring Programme committed to in the development of the Pot Fishing Byelaw. Samples were collected from four areas across the district which are known to be important areas for whelk fishing, working with local fishers. Samples are awaiting processing and will be analysed for size frequency and CPUE. The aim is to build a dataset which, in the future, can be used to help inform management decisions.

196. Bass Guidance 2023

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED A

DCO Dell provided Members with an update on the rules and regulations for bass fishing as of 1st April 2023 and provided a copy of the recreational fishing poster developed to aid recreational fishers in understanding the relevant regulations.

Resolved

197. That Members note the report.

198. Review of Net Fishing Around Piers Code of Practice

IFCO Parry provided Members with background as to the development of the Code of Practice. At the point of implementation, a review date was set for the CoP of 31st December 2022.

A review of the CoP indicated that there had only been five reports of non-compliance with the CoP since its implementation with IFCOs engaging with persons involved in all cases. Engagement was sought with representatives from the South Coast Fishermen's Council and the Recreational Angling Sector Group as part of the review. Input from the RASG indicated that they felt the CoP worked well and were happy for it to continue in its current form, input from the SCFC also expressed no issues and that they were happy for the CoP to continue.

It is therefore the intention to maintain the CoP in its current form with no changes to the provisions contained within it. The Southern IFCA will continue to monitor compliance with the CoP and consideration will be given as to whether any future changes are required if the CoP is seen to not be meeting its objectives.

Ms L MacCallum queried whether all piers in the district were included, Dr A Jensen stated that the nine piers which had been included were not all but were the piers identified by the recreational angling sector as being most important to them.

Resolved

199. That Members note the report.

200. Fisheries Management Plans

PO Mullen provided an update to Members on the development of Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs). PO Mullen provided background information on what FMPs are and how they are being developed as well as outlining the 6 Frontrunner FMPs.

For shellfish FMPs (King Scallop, Whelk and Crab & Lobster), initial drafts were considered in February with comments from that process being reviewed ahead of the public consultation. The target for final publication of these FMPs is the end of October 2023. Proposed management measures being explored by these FMPs were provided to Members in an Annex to the report.

For the Channel Demersal Non-Quota Species FMP, PO Mullen provided Members with an overview of species to be included and updated that some species which had previously been considered for this FMP may be moving to the Southern North Sea and Eastern Channel Mixed Flatfish FMP, but this has yet to be confirmed and that smoothhound had been added. Key engagement has been held in February and March this year both online and in-person for commercial and recreational sectors. Discussions on proposed management measures is currently taking place in the relevant working groups with public consultation in summer 2023 and aiming for publication at the end of December 2023.

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

MARKED A

For the Bass FMP the initial engagement took place in October 2022, since this time there has been little public information available but there is an intention for more engagement in the coming months with an aim for publication at the end of 2023.

For the Southern North Sea and Eastern Channel Mixed Flatfish FMP, PO Mullen outlined the species to be included. Engagement on this FMP is expected to begin in the coming months and it is being considered whether the lead for this FMP will change from Defra to the MMO.

PO Mullen outlined general feedback on FMPs which included a general support for them and an interest in the development of collaborative management. Effective engagement has been highlighted as key, continuing post implementation of the FMPs so that ideas can continue to be shared and avenues for input be maintained. There is support for increased and improved data to aid in decision making, particularly with data poor species such as non-quota species. FMP leads have indicated that there will be full transparency in decision making around FMPs.

PO Mullen outlined the FMPs which were intended for future tranches with the development process commencing in 2024 to 2025. Members were informed that Defra had developed information posters and copies were provided.

Mr R Stride commented that the port visits for the NQS FMP had not been well attended and it was felt this could be because the information provided was high level and not enough information had been provided on specific management measures for fishers to consider. It was also raised that there was concern over the Bass FMP as there had been a lot of engagement early on but updates since that time had been limited and fishers are concerned at what point they will be able to feed into the process again. The CEO informed Members that the first draft of the Bass FMP had been released to arm's length bodies from Defra which will come into the public forum in due course, the timelines for this FMP are being met but it is not as public facing as some of the other FMPs.

Dr A Jensen queried what the TAC role would be in consultation on the FMPs. DCO Birchenough stated that the aim would be to hold some Member workshops with information on proposals provided by PO Mullen and discussion with Members on these to help frame a Southern IFCA response.

Resolved

201. That Members note the report.

202. Marine Licencing Update

IFCO Cast updated Members that 14 marine licence applications had been received by the Southern IFCA for consultation in the period January to April 2023. One had been sent to Southern IFCA in error and information was provided to the MMO licencing team on the extent of the Southern IFCA district.

Four of the applications were deemed to require a response from Southern IFCA. An outline of the nature of these responses was provided to Members as part of the report. IFCO Cast provided detail on the relevant South Marine Plan policies which were taken into account when drafting any responses and also outlined that information had been sought from local fishers to help inform the response.

Points which were raised through the responses included sediment transport and smothering, release of contaminants, location of current Southern IFCA regulations and key fisheries, the need to include the most recent Southern IFCA survey data, the need to clearly identify how

**SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION
AUTHORITY**

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 4th MAY 2023

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works related to relevant Marine Plan policies and that applicants should seek direct liaison with representatives from commercial and recreational fisheries as appropriate in order to ensure that all relevant information is captured. In all cases Southern IFCA offers to help facilitate making connections between the applicant and relevant fishers.

Resolved

203. That Members note the report.

Date and time of Next Meeting

204. That the meeting of the TAC will be on the 24 August 2023 at Southern IFCA Offices, Unit 3, Holes Bay Park.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 17:00.

Chairman:

Date:

DRAFT