

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 6 MAY 2021

Minutes of the Technical Advisory Committee held by remote conference at 1400 on Thursday 6 May 2021.

Present

Dr A Jensen (Chairman, MMO Appointee)

Dr S Cripps	(MMO Appointee)
Mr T Legg	(MMO Appointee)
Ms L MacCallum	(MMO Appointee),
Dr R Morgan	(Natural England)
Mr P Rudd	(Environment Agency)

The Chief Officer, Deputy Chief Officer Bateman, Finance and Administration Officer, Research Officer Small and IFCOs Birchenough, Cooper, Dell, Pengelly and Smith were also present. Members of the public in attendance were Mr A Deeming, Mr T Ferrero (HIOWWT), Mr S Matthews (Commercial Fisher), Mr R Kane (Commercial Fisher), Mr C Smith (Commercial Fisher), Mr D Rodmell (NFFO) and Mr J McClelland (Natural England).

Apologies

24. Apologies were received from: Ms R Irish (MMO), Mr L Stantiford (MMO Appointee), Mr G Wordsworth (MMO Appointee), Mr N Fisher (MMO Appointee), Mr R Stride (MMO Appointee)

Declarations of interest

25. Members declared non-pecuniary interest in the following Minutes: Dr Morgan (29,31,33,35,39), Mr Rudd (37).

Minutes

26. Members considered the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2021. Dr Morgan asked for a small amendment and the Minutes were agreed. The Chairman confirmed the Minutes would be signed in due course.

Progress Report

27. a. **COVID 19** The Chief Officer reported to Members that as already established, officers were working within the current government guidelines. They would be supporting industry and conducting limited boarding operations unless there was an essential need for more involvement. The officers were continuing shoreside patrols and providing intelligence to DEFRA.

b. **IFCA Virtual Meetings** The Chief Officer explained that there is a requirement in the Local Government Acts for Committees or Joint Committees of Local Government to be held in person. The legislation to enable virtual meetings which was temporarily agreed in March 2020 was not due to be extended for Councils. The Chief Officer informed Members that he would seek clarification and contact Members to gauge their willingness to attend face to face meetings.

c. **IFCA 10 Year Anniversary** The Chief Officer explained that as part of the 10th Anniversary celebrations of the IFCAs, the Association of IFCAs was conducting a survey focusing on the achievements, improvements, and the future. A summary of the survey results would be released on 8th June, World Oceans Day. He asked Members to keep two hours free on that date to view the event.

d. **Fisheries Act – JFS and FMP** The Chief Officer explained the purpose of the Act: “*The Fisheries Act will ensure; Fisheries are managed in a sustainable way - balancing social, economic, and social benefits while preventing the over exploitation of fish stocks*” He explained that the Fisheries Act introduced the requirements to produce a Joint Fisheries Statement (JFS) that will be published and set out the authority’s fisheries policy for achieving or contributing to the fisheries objectives and how IFCAs propose to make Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs). He

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 6 MAY 2021

worked through the details, timescales and involvement of the Association and regional fisheries groups.

e. **Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMAs).** The Chief Officer reported to Members that the dates for this piece of work had been moved further along and he would update Members when he had new details.

f. **Drones** The Chief Officer explained that IFCO Dell had done an excellent job on this project and he together with another officer were now qualified drone pilots. Drone information was on the website he gave Members details of a blog available. The Trident ROV had also been deployed in Poole Harbour. The Chief Officer thanked Dr Cripps, Executive Director – Marine Conservation, Wildlife Conservation Society for his assistance sourcing the donated equipment. He reported that there was survey work already being scheduled for the MMO in Studland Bay.

g. **Angling Trust Virtual Sea Angling Forum** The Chief Officer reported that this had taken place on 21 April. It was a great initiative to engage with recreational sea anglers. The responses to the questions will be available through the AT in the near future. 70 people registered with 30 attending on the night. The forum will continue with Sussex IFCA later in May.

h. **Netting Review** The Chairman updated Members who had all been asked to comment direct to him, on officer proposals given at the last working group, by 18 May. The Chairman continued that he had received a request for a statement to be read at the meeting from Mr S Matthews who was representing the Southampton Estuary fishermen regarding the Netting Byelaw, the commercial view on the proposals and the evidence used to develop the recommendations. Mr Matthews thanked the Chairman for reading out his letter. The Chief Officer reported to Members that the next stage would be brought to the August TAC meeting.

Resolved

28. That the reports be noted.

Poole Several Order Management Plan 2021 Review

29. DCO Bateman provided Members an overview and background of the Poole Several Order 2015 Management Plan ('the Plan') and the requirement for the Authority to undertake an annual review of this Plan. DCO Bateman highlighted the additions to the Plan which were made in response to an update of formal advice received from Natural England in late 2020/early 2021, specific to the aquaculture activities taking place on the newly designated lease beds. DCO Bateman explained that these updates provide supplementary information which further inform the existing management of the lease beds under lease conditions and as such the addition have not changed the overarching Management Plan. The reviewed document would be made available on the Authority website. The Chairman thanked DCO Bateman for the report and Members agreed the recommendations under General Consent.

Resolved

30. that the 2021 updates to the Poole Harbour Several Order 2015 Management Plan be approved.

Poole Several Order HRA

31. IFCO Birchenough explained for Members that the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) 2020-25 was required as part of the 5 year renewal of the Several Order Leases. She explained that the paper tabled was a revision of the original Appropriate Assessment (AA) made for the Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015. The AA would determine whether or not in the view of the Authority the issue of leases would hinder the conservation objectives of the Poole Harbour Special Protection Area and lead to an adverse effect on the site integrity. IFCO Birchenough explained the amendments to the document; formal advice received from Natural England and new data regarding Pacific oysters and changes to management in three lease beds. She added

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 6 MAY 2021

that continued monitoring would be undertaken in partnership with Southampton University National Oceanography Centre students. The Chairman thanked IFCO Birchenough for detailed updated report and Members agreed the recommendations under General Consent.

Resolved

32. That the Appropriate Assessment for issuing of leases for the 2020-25 period be approved.

Poole Several Order: Amendment to Business Plan

33. DCO Bateman explained to Members that changes to the Lease Bed Business Plans in Poole Harbour, under, as managed under The Poole Several Order Management Plan, had to be agreed by the Authority. DCO Bateman explained that Lease Bed 3 was in the process of changing ownership and that the Authority had received a proposal from the new owner to amend the Business Plan 2020-25 for Lease Bed 3, which would enable the new owner to relay clams and cockles on the lease beds, sourced from Poole Harbour. DCO Bateman explained that a change to the Business Plan would also require a change to the Lease Conditions to ensure compatibility between the proposed methodology and the conservation designations and biosecurity provisions specific to Poole Harbour. Natural England had agreed these conditions on the 14th April 2021. The Chairman summarised the recommendations, thanked DCO Bateman for the concise report and asked Members to agree the proposals under General Consent.

Resolved

34 a. that changes to the Business Plan 2020-2025 be approved.

b. that the lease conditions for lease 3 be approved.

Portland Seed Mussel Fishery Application

35. IFCO Pengelly reminded Members that In April the Authority had received an application to remove seed mussels from two areas of seabed east of Portland Bill. This followed a previous application from the same fisher to fish mussel seed from within a bottom towed fishing gear closed area that was considered by the TAC in February. Consent is required from the Authority to remove mussels for relaying under the mussel byelaw. Area 1 was outside the boundary of the Studland to Portland Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Area 2 was within this SAC but outside the area closed to bottom towed fishing gear. Tests for Likely Significant Effect (TLSE) were required for the two areas described. He asked Members to consider the two reports attached. The TLSE for Area 1 concluded that the proposed activity will have no likely significant effect and, subject to Natural England formal consultation, it was recommended that consent be given subject to conditions relating to fishing and prior reporting. IFCO Pengelly continued that the TLSE for Area 2 concluded that it was not possible to determine that the proposed activity would not have a likely significant effect. Therefore, a full Appropriate Assessment of the activity would be required and consultation with Natural England, prior to any permissions being issued by the Authority. The Chairman summarised the recommendations, thanked IFCO Pengelly for the details and Members agreed the proposals under General Consent.

Resolved

36. a. That subject to NE formal consent and providing conditions are met, written consent be given for the removal of seed mussels for Area 1.

b. That the applicant provide evidence for the completion of an Appropriate Assessment for Area 2.

Net Fishing Around Piers – Code of Practice

37. IFCO Pengelly explained to Members the background. A number of consultations had been undertaken with both the commercial and recreational fishing sectors, involving representatives from the South Coast Fisherman's Council (SCFC) and the Recreational Angling Sector Group (RASG) and an opportunity had been identified to address the matter through small changes in fishing practice, introduced through a Code of Practice. Given that regulatory measures under the

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 6 MAY 2021

netting review were unlikely to be confirmed in law for some time, due to the timescales associated with byelaw making and subsequent QA, it was suggested that such a code could be introduced in advance, to enable implementation for the coming summer. It is therefore recommended that a Net Fishing Around Piers Code of Practice (CoP) be introduced to exclude the use of fishing nets from within 200m of nine pier locations within the District. He continued that following the dissemination of papers officers received correspondence from the RSA sector highlighting the potential for the code as it is currently worded to exclude the use of landing nets and drop nets, a practice regularly followed by RSA in these locations. It is therefore suggested that a small exemption be added to allow the continuation of this activity. The Chairman summarised the recommendations, the amendment for landing and drop nets and Members agreed the proposals under General Consent.

Resolved

38. That the Net Fishing Around Piers Code of Practice be approved.

MCZ Potting Assessments

39. IFCO Smith explained for Members the next stage of the management of the Tranche 3 Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs). Assessments for pot/trap fishing activities had been undertaken. IFCO Smith presented the finding of the Part B assessments for four of the identified sites. The conclusion was that no additional management would be necessary. The next stage in the process would be for the reports to go to Natural England for their advice. The chairman asked Members to agree the recommendation under General Consent.

Resolved

40. That Natural England be consulted on the Part B Assessment for pot/trap fishing gears in Tranche 3 MCZs.

Minimum Conservation Reference Sizes Literature Review

41. CRO Small asked Members to receive the latest species profiles which will be used as resources for the Southern IFCA Minimum Conservation Reference Size byelaw review timetabled for 2021 -2023. CRO Small reported that maturity data had been summarised for 55 species with data for 25 of these incorporated into species profiles. She explained the next process would be a call for information, with a summary of responses brought to the August TAC meeting. CRO Small continued that two Plymouth University students were progressing their lab analysis on the grey mullet species, using the samples supplied by Southern IFCA commercial fishermen. The Chairman thanked CRO Small for the very useful results. He told Members the research was immensely valuable to the Authority.

Resolved

42. That the report be noted.

Date of Next Meeting

43. That the next meeting of the TAC would be held on 26 August 2021.

44. There being no further business the meeting closed at 15.21.

Chairman:

Date: