

SOUTHERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 26 AUGUST 2021

Minutes of the Technical Advisory Committee held in the Waterfront Room, The Lifeboat College, RNLI, Poole at 1400 on Thursday 26 August 2021.

Present

Dr A Jensen (Chairman, MMO Appointee)
Mr R Stride (Vice Chairman, MMO Appointee)

Dr S Cripps	(MMO Appointee)
Ms L MacCallum	(MMO Appointee)
Mr G Wordsworth	(MMO Appointee)
Ms R Irish	(MMO Appointee)
Mr A Narozanski	(Natural England)
Mr P Rudd	(Environment Agency)

The Chief Officer, Finance and Administration Officer and IFCOs Dell and Pengelly were also present. Members joining virtual via Teams: Mr T Legg (MMO Appointee), CRO Small, IFCOs Birchenough, Cooper, Smith and Taylor and DCO Bateman. Members of the public joining virtual via Teams: Mr T Ferrero, Mr D Rodmell (NFFO), Mr S Matthews (Warsash Fishermen), Mr A Deeming and Mr R Kane.

Election of Chairman

Resolved

45. That Dr Jensen be elected Chairman for the year 2021 - 2022.

Election of Vice Chairman

Resolved

46. That Mr Stride be elected Vice Chairman for the year 2021 – 2022.

Apologies

47. Apologies for absence were received from Dr R Morgan, Mr L Stantiford and Mr N Fisher.

Declarations of interest

48. Members declared the pecuniary interest in the following Minutes: Mr Legg (50h, 54, 56, 58), Mr Stride (56, 60) and non-pecuniary interest in the following Minutes: Mr Legg (52), Mr Rudd (52, 56), Dr Jensen (52, 58), Mr Wordsworth (52, 56, 58), Mr Stride (52)

Minutes

49. Members considered the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 May 2021 and these were then confirmed and signed.

Progress Report

50. **Chief Officer reports.**

a. Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMAs). The Chief Officer reported that locations for pilot HPMAs were being sought. These would be developed using a ecological and socio-economic criterion to refine a list of potential sites to be recommended to the Secretary of State by the end of the year. Formal consultation on the proposed sites would follow Spring 2022. IFCAs will be involved in the socio-economics processes and developing management measures for fishing activities in the 0-6 nautical

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mile zone.

b. Regional Fisheries Groups (RFG). The Chief Officer reported that he and DCO Bateman had attended the recent meetings of the RFG that brought together industry, science, regulators and policy makers. At the SW meeting important issues such as the uplifting in 7e sole quota has increased effort in the Lyme Bay area with concerns of gear conflict and pressure on other species - so a Code of Conduct is being developed for a range of measures to include a limit on fleet length, numbers and gear marking.

c. IFCA Membership. The Chief Officer told Members that the recent MMO recruitment drive for a Member vacancy - had attracted 8 applicants with a focus on science as a speciality. Following a sift of these applications interviews will follow. He thanked Members for their involvement in promoting the vacancy. Dr Cripps asked of the involvement of the individual Authority in selecting the appointees as he felt the IFCA should be more involved in choosing the stakeholders appointed to the organisation. The Chief Officer reported that the Authority is now more involved in the process and has sight of the applications. The AIFCA Chief Officer Robert Clark would be representing the IFCA's on the interview panel.

d. DEFRA CFI Scallops. The Chief Officer reported that DEFRA had a call for information for scallops for latent capacity for 15m and closure for under 10m vessels. SIFCA have provided comment to the consultation.

e. Marine Licensing. The MMO were looking to expand their consultee group for marine license applications. The Chief Officer advised that South Coast Fishermen's Council has been forward for inclusion.

f. Poole Harbour Shellfish. The Chief Officer told Members of a recent downgrade of shellfish beds in Poole Harbour due to poor water quality. The Authority officers assisted BCP Council Environmental Health officers in collection of water samples for two weeks. He continued that a meeting with Wessex Water was scheduled for September to discuss water quality and sewage outfalls and would relay the impact that this has on industry.

The Chief Officer updated Members that there had been incursions into the Green Island saltmarsh management area which was an exclusion zone agreed with Poole and District Fishermen's Association. Evidence will continue to be collated at the end of the season to identify if changes to permit conditions will be required.

g. Dorset Food Festival. The Chief Officer reported that although not able to attend the festival in person, the festival would include a SIFCA MPA video being shown by the Blue Marine Foundation.

h. OceanMind Project. The Chief Officer reported that the South Wight Maritime SAC had been selected for a project being run by OceanMind. The company specialised in monitoring, control and surveillance equipment that could provide satellite imagery to support investigations of non-compliance. IFCOs Dell and Pengelly were leading the project for the Authority which would start this time next year and could offer enhanced compliance for a remote location within the district.

i. Minimum Conservation Reference Size Byelaw. IFCO Pengelly updated Members on the making of this byelaw which had been confirmed in July. The byelaw had been published on the website, face to face with stakeholders and updated stickers and information sheets had been distributed. He continued that the introduction of the new byelaw had been received favourably with recreational and commercial fishers.

Resolved

51. That the reports be noted.

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Netting Review: Net fishing Management Intentions

52. DCO Bateman gave Members details of the progress of this review. She explained that for ease of consideration by Members, the 46 sites had been grouped into 8 Site Packages based on geographic location. DCO Bateman worked through the reports and gave Members a comprehensive and detailed presentation of the draft management intentions explaining the statutory duties of the Authority for each piece of relevant legislation IFCA must comply with.

IFCO Pengelly followed this with an equally detailed presentation of the different sites and the risk assessments undertaken to determine the proposed management measures for each area.

The Chairman thanked both officers for the comprehensive presentations that covered all the points systematically, with understandable cross referencing. He summarized that the individual supporting documents explained the rationale behind the proposals in order to help Members to make informed decisions. The Chairman asked Members to agree the draft Management Intentions with an opportunity to refine or amend where necessary.

Mr Matthews was given the opportunity to address the Members and outlined a number of concerns that he had provided to the Chairman and Chief Officer via email on the 23rd August 2021. These included questions regarding the rationale underpinning the positioning of closing lines specific to Southampton Water and Beaulieu River, as well as questions regarding the proposed net prohibition for the River Hamble 'Area 5' and the fishing area near Hythe Shore. The Chairman thanked Mr Matthews for his input prior to Officers providing response to the questions.

The Chairman read out statements from three Members unable to attend the meeting, all of which provided support for the recommendation. The Chairman gave all other Members present an opportunity to provide comment on the item.

Members concluded that given the scope and complexity of the Netting Review, the Management Intentions, as framed in the context of a process model, would ensure consistency in application and provide a clear and transparent way forward, whilst enabling complex legislative responsibilities and policy objectives to be observed by the Authority. Members recognised that there would be aspects within the management proposals that Members would not fully agree on, due to differing interests but recognised that a risk-based approach to management has provided a way to move forward in order to balance the needs of all interested parties.

Members appreciated the detail and time spent by officers to identify a risk-based approach to management which is proportionate and aligned with the Authority's legal duties, as opposed to a blanket general closure.

The Chairman invited Members to consider the recommendation. One Member abstained, the remaining 7 Members agreed the proposals.

Resolved

53. That the net fishing management intentions for 46 sites across the District to be approved.

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Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw (SDPB): Solent Native Oyster Fishery

54. IFCO Cooper summarised the findings of the Solent native oyster survey 2021 and the proposed management of the fishery that is consistent with the Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw Management Intentions Policy Document.

The survey results show that the decline in oyster stock has continued, and no single bed reached the minimum average catch per unit of effort (CPUE) of 15kg per metre of dredge per hour (kg/m/hr) nor the minimum Bivalve Management Area of 5kg/m/hr. IFCO Cooper asked Members to recommend that SDPB Category B Permits not be initiated for the 2021/22 season running from 1 November 2021 to 31 October 2022. All Members present agreed the proposals.

Recommended

55. a. That the Solent native oyster fishery close for the 2021/22 oyster season.
- b. That no permits be issued for Category B permits under the Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw.

Minimum Conservation Reference Sizes Review – Call for Information Summary of Responses

56. CRO Small reported to Members that the responses received following the recent Call for Information would help inform the next stage of the review of Minimum Conservation Reference Sizes (MCRS) within the District.

The Call for Information with stakeholders sought to address any evidence gaps and gather further information relating to the relevant fisheries. Following the eight week engagement period, 11 stakeholders provided a response. CRO Small informed Members that the response document included previous evidence captured in different consultations relating to minimum sizes to ensure views shared by stakeholders and the community for potting and netting were considered. All Members present agreed the proposals.

Resolved

57. a. That the report be disseminated and published.
- b. That a working group convene to consider the MCRS review.
- c. That a recommendation is made to the Full Authority for the review to progress to Stage 2 of The Byelaw Process.

The Chief Officer reported to Members that Jamie Small would be leaving the IFCA in September to join the JNCC for an exciting job regarding international marine conservation. He thanked Jamie for her three and half years with the Authority. She has completed a lot of research that would be fed into much of the management and review work prioritised for the coming years. IFCO Pengelly reminded Members that CRO Small also worked with the Association of IFCA for two years to complete a national MPA project before joining Southern IFCA. Members wished her well in the new post.

Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Spatial Management Review

58. IFCO Cooper reported to Members the ongoing spatial management review of bottom towed fishing gear across the district undertaken following Tranche 3 of the Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) designations. The working group held in May 2021 discussed the T3 MCZ Assessments and updated feature data and information on existing designated habitats. The working group recommended that draft measures to include supporting recovery of ecologically sensitive essential fish habitats be produced and

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stakeholders be consulted on these measures in Autumn 2021. All Members present agreed the proposal.

Resolved

59. That a recommendation is made to the Full Authority for the review to progress to Stage 2 of The Byelaw Process .

Potting Review: Progress Report

60. IFCO Smith gave Members an update on the Potting Review. She explained that the first draft of management proposals had been developed using the potting consultation results, engaging other fishery regulators at the working group. Further development of these measures would be progressed at a future working group meeting in September. IFCO Smith provided an overview of the next steps, namely that it was the intention that a draft byelaw and accompanying Impact Assessment would be presented to Members at the meeting of the TAC in November. The Chairman thanked IFCO Smith for the presentation of the review.

Resolved

61. That the report be noted.

Solent Scallop Fisheries Review – Progress Report

62. IFCO Cooper updated Members on the progress of the Solent Scallop Review and Scallop Survey that was undertaken this summer in order to build an evidence base in this fishery. IFCO Cooper discussed the outcomes of the survey and explained that following the future implementation of the Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw in November 2021, the first meeting of a Solent Bivalve Community Forum would commence, with the agenda to consider the effectiveness of the Code of Conduct (CoC) and the next steps to management. Details of which will be brought back to the next appropriate.

IFCO Taylor provided Members with an update on industry compliance with the Solent scallop Code of Conduct. He presented a table and explained how the figures had been collated and reasons given by fishers as to why they were not complying with the CoC. The Chairman asked for numbers of potential scallop fishers and IFCO Taylor estimated that before the CoC had been introduced there were approximately 15 vessels that would fish for scallops in the Solent. IFCO Taylor also reported that the MMO and DEFRA were consulting on measures that would affect the scallop fishery.

Resolved

63. That the reports be noted.

Poole Harbour Bivalve Survey 2021

64. IFCO Birchenough updated Members on the findings of the Poole Harbour Bivalve survey that took place earlier this year which had to be modified to comply with COVID – 19 government guidance on social distancing and 23 sites were surveyed instead of the usual 27. Survey sites had been matched with the catch zones permit holders were using. She reported that the stocks were being maintained, anecdotally fishers had reported that size was good again this year. The data catch for the last three years was included in the report. The Chairman thanked IFCO Birchenough; he appreciated the work involved in compiling the finished report.

Resolved

65. That the report be noted.

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Date of Next Meeting

66. That the next meeting of the TAC would be held on 4 November 2021 in the Authority office in Poole.

67. There being no further business the meeting closed at 17.05.

Chairman:

Date:

DRAFT