

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
SUSSEX INSHORE & FISHERIES CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
HELD AT UNIT 12a RIVERSIDE BUSINESS CENTRE, SHOREHAM-BY-SEA
On 24th January 2013**

PRESENT

SUSSEX IFCA:

Members

Councillor Roger Thomas (East Sussex County Council) Chairman
Tony Delahunty (MMO Appointee) Vice Chairman
Councillor Janet Mockridge (West Sussex County Council)
Councillor John Livings (East Sussex County Council)
Graham Furness (MMO Appointee)
Steve Hanks (MMO Appointee)
Charles Bacchus (Environment Agency)
Audrey Jones (Natural England)
Joe Watt (MMO Appointee)
Paul Johnson (MMO)
Peter Jones (MMO Appointee)
James Partridge (MMO Appointee)
Stewart Harper (MMO Appointee)
Robert Yorke (MMO Appointee)
Emma Kelman, (Natural England)
Councillor Ollie Sykes (Brighton & Hove County Council) joined meeting later.

Staff

Tim Dapling (Chief Fisheries & Conservation Officer)
Robert Clark (Deputy Chief Fisheries & Conservation Officer)
Ian Jones (Compliance Manager)
Catherine Holcombe (Finance Manager)
Charles Hubbard (Marine Operations Manager & Master of Vessels)
Kathryn Nelson (Fisheries and Conservation Research Officer)
Rachel Griffin (Acting Committee Manager & Personal Assistant)

Cllr. Thomas extended a warm welcome to everyone and wished all a happy new year. He took the opportunity to thank Charlie Hubbard for his professionalism in respect to vessel operations during the 'MCZ visit' and congratulated the team as a whole. He felt it was very positive that the minister had chosen to visit Sussex IFCA twice during the past year.

151. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

131.1 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. David Rogers, Paul Leonard, Cllr Nicola Waight, David Guy.

152. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 152.1 Councillor Thomas declared a personal interest; he is the Chairman of the *LGA Coastal Issues Special Interest Group*. He did not consider this to be prejudicial.
- 152.2 Cllr. Livings declared he was aware of no prejudicial or pecuniary issues arising from his status as Chairman of East Sussex Fire Authority.

153. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- 153.1 Proposed by Cllr. John Livings and seconded by Stephen Hanks: Approved.
- 153.2 Jim Partridge commented that in 133.2 should read 'EON' and not 'NPower'.
- 153.3 Robert Yorke pointed out that he had actually been absent and not present at the meeting as the minutes recorded.
- 153.4 **Matters Arising**

135.1 Tim Dapling checked that everyone had received a copy of the Annual Report which had been circulated in November, it was available on the IFCA website and the web page address was provided to members. The report had been submitted to the Secretary of State as stipulated in the guidelines and there is a link on Sussex IFCA's website to it too, he said.

- 153.5 Jim Partridge felt he was suffering from an overload of information. Tim Dapling understood his concerns and suggested members might focus on priority reports including decision items if that was helpful.
- 153.6 Rob Clark commented on 136.1. The IFCAs, the MMO and Natural England have received from Defra new advice on interpretation of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. A meeting has been arranged with Southern IFCA, as we manage Chichester harbour fisheries with them. A national workshop is set for 1st February, with all organisations, to look at a consistent approach to the rollout of the Directive and to address all relevant issues.
- 153.7 *Hastings Undersea Project* (139.2) has now received funding and cameras have been distributed. Natural England and the fishermen are particularly excited about this project and there is a lot of interest in it generally.
- 153.8 *Brighton Biosphere Project* (139.3) has a consultation launch on Monday January 28th.
- 153.9 John Livings enquired about the *Byelaw Review Process* (141) Rob Clark explained that there was confusion caused by the name and that a more accurate name was now being used: *Review of Management Measures*, which was the next item on the agenda.

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25th October 2012 as a correct record.

155. DECISION ITEMS

155.1 Review of Management Measures

Rob Clark said that the previous meeting had requested that a consultation document be produced which describes what the authority is about, our purpose and requirements as related to reviewing the byelaws. It became clear that there was need for discussion in a much more holistic way, Rob Clark said. He is grateful to the Technical Subcommittee for their input and the resulting document has changed a great deal, and for the better in his opinion. The draft supplied, lays out our duties, our powers and sets up a dialogue with the wider public, outlining our objectives and those have insisted on. The recommendation was, Rob Clark explained, that members accept this document with any changes agreed at this board meeting.

155.2 Graham Furness said that we have to be clear on the rules on byelaws from the outset. Rob Clark agreed and said that the text was taken from Defra guidance. Rob Clark thought that there are different scales of risks, and that lesser issues may require a voluntary approach, with no byelaw necessary. Tim Dapling said that it was necessary to introduce appropriate regulatory measures in some instances. Graham Furness was keen to respond 'fast and hard'. Ian Jones said that, whatever the byelaw in question, we have a regulatory management process in place. Paul Johnson said that it was important not to over regulate.

155.3 General discussion ensued on the use of byelaws and voluntary messages. Graham Furness was keen on a clear set of rules rather than a code of conduct.

155.4 AGREED that recommendation 2.1 be accepted subject to any final Amendments agreed by Rob Clark, Graham Furness, Peter Jones and other interested members.

156. Public Consultation on Marine Conservation Zones

156.1 Rob Clark introduced the *Public Consultation on Marine Conservation Zones*. Opinion is requested on their approach and first tranche of sites, which in Sussex includes Beachy Head West, Kingmere and Pagham. The public and Sussex IFCA have been asked to respond to the proposals within a framework of questions on the specific sites for this first phase. We are not being asked to comment on additional sites, he said. Rob Clark maintained that a robust response can easily be submitted to these questions. It was agreed that a full response be developed. Tim Dapling introduced a supplementary letter received from the Marine Conservation Society, asking us about our approach re Beachy Head East site, which is not, as yet, a designated site. This will form part of the discussion by the Technical Subcommittee, Cllr. Thomas assured the meeting.

- 156.2 Graham Furness asked if it was known when the second tranche would be happening. Cllr. Rogers and officers explained we have no dates and that it was very difficult to get any timetable from them at the moment.
- 156.3 Janet Mockridge and Emma Kelman raised possible concerns about fishing near wind farms. Paul Johnson reported that the cables from wind farms cause no problems currently. There followed a discussion on the value of wind farm sites in respect to conservation.
- 156.4 AGREED Recommendations 2.1 and 2.2.
- 156.5 All were in favour of responding, Cllr Rogers said, and we all agreed with the current designated sites. It was agreed that consideration of other sites under Recommendation 2.3 be referred to the Technical Subcommittee and 2.4 was agreed, that the group develop a response.
- 156.6 Peter Jones asked if any areas not yet designated are on Natural England's Risk Register. Rob Clark confirmed that Beachy Head East was one. Peter Jones was keen that we challenge the fact that this area was not on the first tranche. Rob Clark said that we are in a delicate situation, should we be expected to restrict sustainable fisheries in Beachy Head West and East? The Technical Subcommittee will discuss all the points raised. Tim Dapling suggested that members give the subcommittee authority to produce our response; after some discussion, this was agreed. Cllr Livings asked that responses be circulated to relevant town councils who would welcome advice.

157. IFCA Planning 2013-2014

- 157.1 Tim Dapling introduced the focus and priorities for the 2013/2014 Annual Plan and recently published Annual Report. Each year there will be matching report and plan, he said. As described in the report, there is a clear list of Defra guidelines and how information should be presented, providing an overview of the organisation, objectives agreed, priorities and focus. Structure, financing and the constitution of the organisation are clearly set out. The seven success criteria are listed and are accompanied by strong commitments to high level objectives including strong commitments to evidence based decisions for example.
- 157.2 Responsible members of staff are listed in action plans and their acronyms. Tim Dapling was conscious that this is a public-facing documents that attempts to balance the amount of information supplied, and not overload readers. All comments were welcomed on proposals for next year.
- 157.3 ALL RESOLVED to accept the report and recommendations.

158. INFORMATION ITEMS

158.1 Schip Update & Questionnaire

Rob Clark recommended that we note the appended report. Sussex Coastal Habitats Inshore Pilot have supplied a report on the status of coastal waters funded by The Environment Agency. This is a detailed report asking the wider community about its perceptions and providing an opportunity for that wider community to collaborate in evidence gathering as we go forward.

The response has taught us about the opportunities and challenges available, RC said, and is a useful contribution to the national process, which Richard Benyon MP is about to construct. Rob Clark thanked Tony Delahunty for his help.

159. Appointment of Officers

159.1 Tim Dapling updated the meeting on staff changes:

There are two new appointments in the last quarter.

Tim Dapling welcomed Kathryn Nelson, who has now joined the Authority as *Fisheries and Conservation Research Officer*. Her post commences February 1st.

The second appointment, *Fisheries and Conservation Marine Protected Area Officer*, has been accepted by Erin Pettifer, who joins Sussex IFCA on 11th February. Both adverts attracted many, excellent candidates.

159.2 RESOLVED to note the items.

160. Compliance and Enforcement

160.1 Ian Jones led into the report by explaining the purpose of the meeting of the Compliance Subcommittee on 7th January, he included the minutes of this meeting and explained how the Technical Subcommittee works and how tactical resolutions are applied. The Tactical Tasking and Coordination Group meet every fortnight and once a month other agencies are invited along to add their input and collaboration, the next is scheduled for 4th March.

160.2 Information reports are steady this month, Ian said, there are 43 this month. We have a consistent approach to intelligence gathering at the moment, he said. He detailed the *Information Reports and Enforcement Activity* table. There have been two prosecutions in the last quarter, IJ said. A Conditional Discharge was granted on the first prosecution with all costs to be paid, and the second resulted in £1,500 fine and all fees and costs to be paid.

160.3 *Overall Officer Hours* pie chart shows what other tasks are carried out by the Officers and the *Enforcement Hours* pie chart shows the split in enforcement activity.

- 160.3 Ian Jones described the successful joint agency oyster operation which commenced mid October. The other major operation has been the drift net operation, which he will report on at the next quarterly board meeting.
- 160.4 Jim Partridge has received calls from unhappy fisherman who understood they were not allowed to have over their quota of nets on board, even if in harbour. This appeared to be a misunderstanding, as only applicable when at sea. Jim Partridge requested more information be distributed on this matter. Joe Watt added that many say they are unclear as to how many they can carry. Ian Jones agreed to follow up the issue and ensure information is available and circulated.
- 160.5 Peter Jones said that a web interface would be a good forum for photos to be submitted by the public to support compliance. It was explained that the Authority has established processes in place to receive public information to support enforcement activity. Officers recognised the value of such information to support compliance activities.

161. Summary of Income and Expenditure from 1st April 2012 to 31st December 2012 and Balance Sheet

- 162.1 Catherine Holcombe, Finance Manager, was not present to submit her report, having come in earlier for the Finance Subcommittee and gone home ill. Cllr. Rogers thanked her for coming in at all, when indisposed.
- 162.2 Tim Dapling introduced the financial reports, explaining that they had been approved by the Finance Subcommittee meeting earlier in the day. There is a deficit currently of £7k which is a significant improvement on the last quarter. A summary of the budget, actuals and some narrative on variables for the last nine months were listed. Jim Partridge asked why the annual service for *Watchful* was listed separately as there was always an annual service included. Tim Dapling explained that some annual expenditure has to be spread throughout the year and that Catherine Holcombe is in the process of developing the financial reporting system. Tim Dapling reminded all the members that the financial position for the forthcoming year would be challenging, given the levy and income restraints.
- 162.3 ALL RESOLVED to note the report.

163. Budget & levy figures for 2013 to 2014

- 163.1 Cllr. Rogers said that there is a proposed standstill budget for the next two years, which all three councils have thankfully agreed to, but which had to be fought for and is by no means a given. He thanked all three authorities.

163.2 Tim Dapling said that, now that the levy was agreed, the Authority would submit levy notices to the constituent authorities. In respect to income, Tim Dapling commented on an estimate in respect to MMO vessel requirements and £25k for other project income.

163.3 ALL RESOLVED to note the report.

164. Vessel & vehicle maintenance log, 1st Oct to 31st December

164.1 Charlie Hubbard requested comments on his report. Joe Watt complimented him on the way the diesel consumption has been kept down.

164.2 RESOLVED to note the report.

165. Association of Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authorities

165.1 A copy of the Association's minutes were circulated.

Tim Dapling reported that both he and Tony Delahunty had attended the last AIFCA meeting which had been held in London on 15th December. There was a presentation re Project Inshore, which is the National Assessment of Inshore Fisheries, in England only. There was also a discussion of bass minimum sizes, Tim Dapling said. Two approaches had been made to other IFCAs from the Bass Society concerning a reduction in the bass minimum size. Tim Dapling reminded them that a lot of activity and discussion had already previously taken place and nearly resulted in a change of national minimum legal size. He pointed out that a new measure across the board was required and the Chief Executive had written to the Bass Society in consultation with COs. Tim Dapling commented that any changes locally would be considered in the context of the 'review of management measures'.

165.2 Tim said that locally there are significant efforts being made in respect to bass management. This included minimum size, bass nursery areas and netting regulations.

165.3 Tony Delahunty commented on the discussion concerning European Marine Sites with Defra present. He was surprised by Defra's officials' change in approach toward EMS management in light of its position over many years.

165.4 Cllr Rogers thanked Tony Delahunty for taking his place at the meeting.

RESOLVED to note the report.

167. Communication Report

- 167.1 Rob Clark highlighted the ministerial visit for the MCZ roll out. Rob then said that we were lucky to have been invited to the Newhaven Harbour Fishing Group, to get feedback and information. Both he and Tony Delahunty had visited Cambridge to discuss the Chichester Harbour oyster project, there had been a lot of interest in the role of oysters in the eco system. Finally, The Hastings Herring Fair had been another interesting event.
- 167.2 Sussex is to create a local nature partnership, Rob Clark said. This is an exciting government initiative to bring organisations and NGOs together and identify where they overlap and where synergies exist.
- 167.3 The Panache project has started, broadly looking at the Protected Area Network in the channel. Ian Jones has provided input on compliance.
- 167.4 The Adur and Ouse catchment plan is awaiting feedback, which we should be able to report on at the next meeting.

RESOLVED to note the report.

168. FIPAD IFCA continued support

- 168.1 Rob Clark said that FIPAD was an archaeological recording protocol which we have been trialling for 9 months, funded by English Heritage and led by Wessex Archaeology. It supports fishermen to record their finds, for example, Jim Partridge's cannon and other religious stone relics. Future directions have been discussed at a meeting by Wessex Archaeology and they have produced an interim report, Rob Clark explained. Tony Delahunty and Robert Yorke are on the steering committee for FIPAD.
- 168.2 Robert Yorke congratulated Rob Clark and Tony Delahunty on this very important initiative. It was very important, now that we have a structure in place, that legacy finds are noted and that sites are mapped. Funding needs securing with Wessex Archaeology for next year. Robert Yorke said, Rob Clark to action writing to Wessex Archaeology.

RESOLVED to note the items.

169 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 168.1 Tim Dapling explained that Defra and Cefas are planning to come on 7th February and present the Shellfish Assessment work to the Technical Subcommittee. All members will be informed of exact arrangements in the week commencing 28th January.

169. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

149.1 16th May 2013 (changed due to elections) – venue 12a Riverside.

170. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

170.1 Approved by Chairman

Councillor Roger Thomas