

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
SUSSEX INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
on 27th July 2023**

at Sussex Yacht Club, 85/89 Brighton Road, Shoreham-by-Sea

PRESENT

Members

Prof. Peter Jones (Chair)
Councillor Pieter Montyn (West Sussex County Council)
Councillor Noel Atkins (West Sussex County Council)
Councillor Emma Evans (West Sussex County Council)
Councillor Julia Hilton (East Sussex County Council)
Dr Paul Driver (MMO Appointee)
Sally Ashby (MMO Appointee)
Graham Furness (MMO Appointee)
Paul Johnson (MMO Appointee)
Prof. Paul Leonard (MMO Appointee)
Andy Read (MMO Appointee)
Mark Bennett (MMO Appointee)
Julian Seaman (MMO Appointee)

Giulietta Holly (NE) – Substitute for Paula Daglish

Staff

Robert Pearson (Chief Fisheries & Conservation Officer)
Angharad Purcell (Deputy Chief Fisheries & Conservation Officer)
Tim Dapling (Strategic Advisor & Clerk)
Charlie Hubbard (Marine Operations Manager & Master of Vessels)
Dr George Balchin (Conservation & Research Manager)
Rebecca Belleni (Committee Manager and Personal Assistant to SMT)
Vanessa Simons (Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Officer)
Dr Jen Lewis (Conservation & Research Manager) [Online]

1 CHAIR & CHIEF OFFICER'S INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Prof. Peter Jones opened the quarterly meeting with a special mention to Rob Pearson who had been present at the AGM as an observer and now as the new Chief Fisheries Officer for SxIFCA at his first Committee Meeting in the role.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Tom Liddard (East Sussex County Council)
Councillor Sam Adeniji (East Sussex County Council)
Dr Corina Ciocan (MMO Appointee)
Garry Walker (MMO Appointee)
Gary Edwards (MMO Appointee)
Paula DGLISH (MMO Appointee)

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

- 3.1 Cllr Noel Atkins as West Sussex County Councillor and for Worthing Borough Council. Member of Littlehampton Harbour Board. Chair of Worthing Royal Naval Association.
- 3.2 Julian Seaman as Harbour Master for Shoreham Port Authority berthing providers for SxIFCA vessels and various inshore fishing vessels.
- 3.3 Andy Read for Fishing News Editor.
- 3.4 Cllr Emma Evans as Adur Council Member and West Sussex Member.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 4.1 The Chair, Prof. Peter Jones, asked members to approve the minutes from the AGM in April as an accurate record.

ALL RESOLVED to approve the minutes.

5. MATTERS ARISING

- 5.1 Prof. Peter Jones asked all present if there were any matters arising.
None.

6 ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR

- 6.1 Prof. Peter Jones introduced this item with a formal handover to Tim Dapling in his new role as SxIFCA Strategic Advisor and Clerk.
- 6.2 Tim Dapling thanked the Chair and proceeded to advise on Cllr. Leo Littman, who was elected Deputy Chair at the Annual meeting in April. Unfortunately, Cllr. Littman had not been re-elected to BHCC in the May elections, which consequently meant he lost his seat on the Authority. He added that the BHCC member has not yet been appointed and that we have asked Democratic Services for an update on this.

It was noted for the record that Leo Littman had been very supportive of the Authority throughout his membership and given much time and input in his role as Deputy Chair. Sincere thanks, had been expressed to Leo from both the Chair and Chief Officer on behalf of all the members and staff.

- 6.3 Tim Dapling advised that, reflecting the Authority's Standing Orders process for the election of the Deputy Chair at the annual meeting, he had sent an email to members on the 1st July seeking nominations within two weeks in advance of today's meeting. Two nominations had been forthcoming, for Cllr. Noel Atkins and Dr Corina Ciocan. Tim Dapling noted that although Dr Corina Ciocan was not present she could still be elected in her absence. He asked if any members would be happy to second both nominations. Paul Johnson second Dr Corina Ciocan and Cllr Pieter Montyn second Cllr Noel Atkins.

Cllr Noel Atkins left the meeting room for election to take place.

- 6.4 Tim Dapling continued and checked whether Dr Corina Ciocan was aware she had been nominated and was willing to stand.
- 6.5 Paul Johnson responded with confirmation that she was aware and willing.
- 6.6 Tim Dapling explained that the procedure would now be on majority votes and asked members to vote for Deputy Chair with a hand raise when announced.

Cllr Noel Atkins – 5 votes

Dr Corina Ciocan – 5 votes (2 were proxy votes)

Remaining members abstained.

- 6.7 Tim Dapling advised this resulted in a division of votes and in such circumstances the Chair, Prof Peter Jones had a casting vote.
- 6.8 Prof. Peter Jones stated that, taking into account that the Deputy would usually chair the Finance Subcommittee and in order to maintain the

balance between a Local Authority member either as Chair or Deputy, his casting vote went to Cllr. Noel Atkins.

- 6.9 Andy Read explained he had withheld from voting due to lack of information on what the nominee's objectives were. He added 1 year in this position does not seem long enough and suggested a longer period but with the caveat on a vision statement to members prior to voting. He asked if there was any mechanism for this to take place.
- 6.10 Tim Dapling responded to this with reference to the Standing Orders and the defined 4-year maximum period for members in Chair and Deputy Chair positions. He added that, although the election process is annual and a new member could be appointed, typically the Chair and Deputy Chair were re-elected to maintain continuity until they reach the 4 years. He also explained the potential issues these positions, running for longer periods would create, in regard to the appointment periods for MMO members and also Council elections. Tim Dapling said that the existing process had appeared to function well during his tenure as Chief Officer and working with the different Chairs and Deputy Chairs during that time.
- 6.11 Prof. Peter Jones thanked Andy Read for this point and took the opportunity to congratulate Cllr. Noel Atkins as newly appointed Deputy Chair.
- 6.12 Tim Dapling took this opportunity whilst on appointments to welcome Julian Seaman as the SxIFCA Committee Member.
- 6.13 Julian Seaman took this time to introduce himself to members and gave a brief overview on his current position as Harbour Master and Marine Director at Shoreham Port. He also explained his previous work background in inshore and offshore fisheries.
- 6.14 Prof. Peter Jones responded to this extending a warm welcome to Julian, commenting on how the knowledge from his current and past work experience will benefit the Authority.
- 6.15 Tim Dapling advised that since the Subcommittee members were assigned during the AGM in April, prior to Julian Seaman's appointment, it would be beneficial to formally approve Julian Seaman, due to his knowledge and experience, as a Technical Subcommittee member at this time.
- 6.16 Julian Seaman was keen and willing to join the Technical Subcommittee and his appointment was approved by members.

DECISION ITEMS

- 7 Beachy Head East MCZ Management; Making of 'MPA Byelaw 2023'**
- 7.1 Prof. Peter Jones introduced this significant decision item and explained to members that today we are proposing to make the Beachy Head East MCZ

Byelaw. He reminded members that although an important stage, it is not the final stage and if approved today this will enter a full formal, regional consultation process and consideration of stakeholder responses. Thereafter it will require final approval at a subsequent Committee Meeting before submission to the MMO and Defra.

- 7.2 Robert Pearson gave an overview on the Byelaw's development process so far, explaining that prior to this Committee Meeting there had been notification sent to members of intention to make the Byelaw. He added that under section 154 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act we have a statutory duty to further the conservation objectives of Marine Conservation Zones through assessment and development of fisheries management measures for the sites within our district. He highlighted that Beachy Head East is the final MCZ in the SxIFCA district which requires introduction of management and to meet Defra's deadline of 2024 and explained that this introduction of management will be through the revocation of the existing MPA 2017 Byelaw and making a new Byelaw with an additional schedule 5, which introduces management measures pertinent to BHE MCZ. He also reiterated that if the recommendations to make this Byelaw are approved at the present meeting, a phase of formal consultation will follow and thereafter the outcomes, analysis and potential amendments from this will be considered at a further Technical Subcommittee meeting. He concluded with a proposed timeline to present and approve the final byelaw at Quarter 4 Committee meeting in January 2024, prior to submission to Defra.
- 7.3 Robert Pearson updated members on the Technical Subcommittee held on 27th June, where proposed management options from the Informal Consultation were discussed in detail. He confirmed that the majority vote approved the management proposal as presented in schedule 5 of the draft Byelaw, subject to any agreed or corrective amendments identified by officers.
- 7.4 Rob Pearson further added that this details a zonal based approach, consistent with what has been implemented in previous MPA Byelaw schedules. Referring to report pg.57, he explained this proposal of Zone 1 to prohibit the use of towed gear, year-round based on a boundary measurement to protect designated features of the site. A second Zone (Zone 2) would allow towed gear fishing activities to continue, retaining some access to fishers where this activity will not have a significant effect on protected features of the site.
- 7.5 Rob Pearson clarified that during the informal consultation both the use of bottom towed gear and towed gear were mentioned, but for consistency with the MPA Byelaw the terminology to be considered is towed gear.
- 7.6 Rob Pearson informed the Committee that Natural England had raised an issue at the Technical Subcommittee, regarding a historic record and

coordinate point for sabellaria within the proposed Zone 2. This record was from a Seasearch diver in 1995. He added that SxIFCA were unable to confirm this still being present during ROV surveys in 2021. NE proposed that as the conservation objective for this feature is to promote recovery and a precautionary management approach should be favoured, this point should be considered for protection. He continued to add that SxIFCA explained the challenges surrounding single point-based protection, not only for fishers to comply with but for enforcement, and how the alternative of a full site exclusion would then alienate the fishing community by excluding a large area based on a point of evidence which has low confidence and for a feature which is ephemeral in nature.

- 7.7 Rob Pearson concluded that after a discussion on this at the Technical Subcommittee and based on the low evidence of this single historic point along with the challenges for compliance and enforcement and the need to show credibility on decision making with stakeholders, the decision was taken to continue with the proposed management measures by majority vote. He highlighted that NE abstained during the vote.
- 7.8 Rob Pearson updated members on NE providing further comments with regards to the BHE MCZ assessment which he received on the 26th July, the day prior to the Committee Meeting.
- 7.9 Rob Pearson made reference to the 3km square area that lies out with the SxIFCA District and is MMO jurisdiction. He added that SxIFCA have had regular meetings with the MMO's marine conservation team regarding this section and provided them with updates on our timeline and expectations. It is hoped that these management measures align but to note the MMO will be conducting their own risk assessment for this area.
- 7.10 Rob Pearson concluded with a note to members on minor updates with regards to some of the referenced coordinates since the Technical Subcommittee to distinguish the zone areas based on the latest 2023 mean high water springs data.
- 7.11 Dr George Balchin provided members with an update on the MCZ assessment which he stated were minor. He made reference to table 8 at the end of the report, which now provides the management options and how these relates to the conservation objectives. He mentioned the NE formal response received and that this is available on request by members. He reiterated the formal response outlined an objection by NE for the proposed management on the basis of the one Sabellaria point that will not receive protective management within Zone 2.
- 7.12 Dr Geroge Balchin explained the low confidence in the evidence and location of this point. He stressed the significant risks related to the management of this feature in regards to reputational whole site and points management related to Compliance and Enforcement issues. He added that

inclusion of this point would increase the total area managed within the MCZ by 0.13km².

- 7.13 Giulietta Holly took an initial moment to advise she was substitute for Paula Daghish today and that she is a Senior Marine Advisor at NE. She gave an overview on NE being statutory consultees and providing advice on MPA management. She explained that NE have provided a number of iterations on the BHE MCZ assessment and supported the stakeholder workshops.
- 7.14 Giulietta Holly stated that overall NE agree with the conclusions from the MCZ assessment regarding activities requiring management, additionally she said they welcome the byelaw to prohibit towed gear to protect the majority of the rock and Sabellaria reef, though she also stressed the concerns for the extent of area outside this prohibition, including the potential area of Sabellaria within Zone 2.
- 7.15 Giulietta Holly explained that full closure of the site following the informal consultation was the favoured option by NE, though the 500m boundary around features including the outlier points that was presented would ensure adequate protection. She added that NE also would accept the 200m boundary around those features and all of these options would have ensured SxIFCA were fulfilling their conservation objectives. She also highlighted the conservation objective specifically for Sabellaria is to recover the feature within the site.
- 7.16 Giulietta Holly concluded by informing the committee that their advice is precautionary at the moment based on the absence of evidence for Zone 2 including the Sabellaria point. She also raised the concern of there being no mechanism to change a Byelaw within 4 years, after it has been passed. She also said NE are working hard to gather extensive bathymetric surveys and imminently expecting camera work for the site which would then be available for SxIFCA to utilise in the MCZ assessment.
- 7.17 Sally Ashby questioned the validity of the Byelaw being revised within a 4-year period.
- 7.18 Rob Pearson explained that with the introduction of a monitoring control plan this would enable us to review before the 4 year period, based on new evidence.
- 7.19 Prof. Peter Jones posed the question back to NE in light of this option to review through the monitoring control plan and asked whether this would alleviate the concerns raised and be a solution.
- 7.20 Giulietta Holly advised that she would require further understanding on what this would entail.

- 7.21 Tim Dapling informed members on the byelaw making process and the time constraints we are faced with to meet Defra's 2024 deadline for MPA management, highlighting that waiting on new data without any confirmation on when this will happen will jeopardise this process and agreed planning objectives, but reconfirming that when data is available the Byelaw can be reviewed.
- 7.22 Giulietta Holly advised they are anticipating the ground truthing camera work will take place this year which would confirm if Sabellaria is present in this area.
- 7.23 Dr Paul Driver posed the question that if Sabellaria is not found after new camera surveys will they relinquish or retain their concern based on historical data.
- 7.24 Giulietta Holly said this if there was no Sabellaria found in this area this would alleviate concerns around trawling in this specific section. She added that NE would look to work with SxIFCA on monitoring controls for this area.
- 7.25 Prof. Paul Leonard raised the Marine Aggregate Levy Sustainability Fund which he advised would shed light on Sabellaria being present in that area when surveys were taken place. He also queried the past informal consultation change on removal of subtidal chalk in the east from NE.
- 7.26 Dr Jen Lewis explained that, following further scrutiny, the outlying chalk location was removed from NE evidence database and therefore removed from SxIFCA MCZ assessment.
- 7.27 Giulietta Holly advised that their evidence team had looked at this outlying chalk and due to the low confidence in this it was removed, though the Sabellaria was medium to low which therefore meant it was kept.
- 7.28 The Chair, Prof. Peter Jones summarised the decision item. Explaining the three options to members. 1) To suspend the making of the byelaw, pending further evidence. 2) To proceed with making the byelaw without the support of NE. 3) To make the byelaw with a formal commitment to adaptive management if and when emerging evidence is gathered.
- 7.29 Tim Dapling informed the committee that once formal consultation had progressed, it would not be possible to make any amendments to the proposed as new data becomes available in 2024. Such amendments would require a separate formal consultation process. He explained that any intended amendment to a byelaw is required to follow the Defra guidance to IFCAs on Byelaw Making. Byelaw amendments can be made at any time the Authority chooses to commence the process.

- 7.30 Paul Johnson said the risk with new evidence arising from NE that Defra would likely request a reconsult and therefore his opinion would be to delay and wait but with a timeline in place.
- 7.31 Rob Pearson voiced concern in delaying the introduction of the byelaw by another 6 to 9 months, reminding members this will be further time the site and it's 152sq km of designated features will lie unprotected.
- 7.32 Paul Johnson added that he didn't believe Defra's 2024 MPA deadline was something of concern and was flexible. Furthermore, he thought the features were not at significant risk in the absence of management and that SxIFCA were at risk of additional workload if new evidence is found.
- 7.33 Dr Jen Lewis reiterated that NE had advised on imminent new data and raised concern over timing delays as NE had also stated the contract was not yet awarded.
- 7.34 Giulietta Holly appreciated this concern and explained this work is a priority and the aim is for this to be carried out before then end of the year.
- 7.35 Cllr. Emma Evans questioned how long NE had known they required additional data and she also added that there needs to be a deadline should the decision be to delay.
- 7.36 Sally Ashby highlighted her concern with the delay in making the byelaw for one point feature with the majority being protected if we proceed today. She added a precautionary approach factoring in ecological tipping points would be to protect as many as you can, as quickly as you can.
- 7.37 Dr George Balchin described the timeline to date with regards to NE, stating the first MCZ assessment was given to NE in March 2020. He added the continuous push for the survey work to be carried out and their request to delay the informal consultation in October 2022 and now 9 months on he feels we are nearing the final stages and the concern is on when this data will be gathered and formalised. He also explained that the monitoring control plan will set thresholds beyond which management changes or is reconsidered based on available aground truth data.
- 7.38 Dr George Balchin highlighted the reason for low confidence with regards to the Sabellaria point, as it was collected by a Seasearch diver in 1995, specifying an unknown quantity of Sabellaria, recorded by a diver with unknown experience and very low confidence in the locality. He added that SxIFCA video surveyed this site area in 2021 and could not locate it.
- 7.39 Andy Read raised the question of delaying with a deadline date to making the proposed Byelaw by October 2023.

- 7.40 Prof. Peter Jones advised this was a pragmatic option and that they would come back to this.
- 7.41 Giulietta Holly reiterated that it is a long process and it is SxIFCA's responsibility to undertake this, which NE have worked on them with. She stressed the expense and extensive work in doing marine surveys and that BHE has been the priority for several years.
- 7.42 Tim Dapling explained that SxIFCA had been transparent with regards to planning process within the 4 year and annual plans that were shared with NE and Defra and therefore the aim for management of BHE based on the best available data was the focus this year. He added the commitment to Defra on delivering MPA management by 2024 which we have received funding for and the reputational fallout from not meeting this deadline. He further added the significant work to date and momentum achieved from the informal consultation could easily be lost through delay, in order to perhaps understand better a small fraction of less than 1% of the entire site.
- 7.43 Prof. Peter Jones raised a final point hypothetically speaking on suspending the making of the byelaw for 6 months and if new evidence emerged in that time, he feels we would lose specifically the industry support which we have built through the informal consultation workshops. He added the importance of this from Defra and the MMO's perspective on industry support.
- 7.44 Prof. Peter Jones then summarised the three options for members to decide upon.
- 1) We proceed to make the byelaw with lack of full support from NE, noting that Defra and the MMO may delay the confirmation process as a result.
 - 2) Suspend making of the byelaw with a deadline of January 2024 within which the new evidence must be provided.
 - 3) Proceed with making the byelaw but with a commitment to reviewing this in light of future new substantial evidence.
- 7.45 Giulietta Holly reiterated that NE would still stand with suspending the byelaw until further evidence is gathered in the imminent months. She stressed the concern around not fully understanding the process of reviewing the byelaw or creating an emergency byelaw once in place and added that this has been raised by NE to SxIFCA in the past.
- 7.46 Prof. Peter Jones clarified that the byelaw could be amended but the political reality is that this is a process which could happen once the byelaw had been approved, but also noted that when this is still in process with Defra and the MMO this would not be able to happen, which could be 6–12 months or even longer.

- 7.47 Giulietta Holly queried if SxIFCA could implement an emergency byelaw if the data gathered confirmed a large area of Sabellaria and therefore stop trawling activity immediately within this exposed point.
- 7.48 Dr George Balchin brought attention back to the monitoring control plan which he highlighted had always been included within the management of BHE MCZ. Explaining the purpose is to set threshold triggers for review or change in management at a point that evidence is available.
- 7.49 Rob Pearson added there would be a time constraint with conducting a review of the byelaw and argued if this was a higher risk than the delay involved in protecting the sites designated features now.
- 7.50 Sally Ashby said from an ecological restoration perspective that to protect a vast area of the seabed and the connectivity of the marine environment and dynamic nature and its complexities she feels we shouldn't concentrate on one feature at the expense of protecting a whole area that is ecologically connected.
- 7.51 Dr Jen Lewis raised a point regarding the acoustic surveys which did not highlight any possible Sabellaria reef within the area of this data point.
- 7.52 Giulietta Holly advised that the acoustic survey had areas in Zone 2 which will require further investigation but added the uncertainty around this section due to Sabellaria being ephemeral.
- 7.53 Prof. Peter Jones directly asked NE at what point would they accept that they have gathered enough data to allow this to proceed and raised concern over NE pushing this timeline further out if insufficient results are found.
- 7.54 Giulietta Holly agreed that a deadline of January 2024 would be the acceptable for NE to finalise data gathering for this point.
- 7.55 Prof. Peter Jones proposed that, following considerable useful discussion members take a discussion on the proposed recommendations. Tim Dapling explained to members how the voting procedure would be conducted and prior to voting on the recommendations he asked the room if there were any alternative propositions.
- 7.56 Paul Johnson proposed we delay until January 2024 in anticipation of further data gathering from NE.

Proposed by Paul Johnson
Seconded by Julian Seaman

Votes in favour of the proposal to delay making the byelaw until 2024.

For 4 Against 9

MAJORITY VOTE DEFEATED ALTERNATIVE PROPSAL.

7.57 Prof. Peter Jones advised this defeat would result in a vote for the recommendations stated in 2.1 agenda item.

Recommendations, taken one by one:

- i. That the Authority make the 'Marine Protected Areas Byelaw 2023' and therein, Schedule 5 Beachy Head East Marine Conservation Zone (Annex II), in accordance with the relevant IFCA Byelaw making provisions of The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 and recommended by the Technical Subcommittee on 27th June 2023.**

Additional amendment:

To include formal commitment on the introduction of future byelaw management revisions, if sufficient evidence become available that necessitate an early review.

Vote for Recommendation i: For 12 Against 2 Abstentions 1

MAJORITY RESOLVED to accept recommendation i as amended.

- ii. That in making the Byelaw the Authority agrees to revoke the 'Marine Protected Areas Byelaw 2017'.**

ALL RESOLVED to accept recommendation ii

- iii. That the Authority approves the associated Impact Assessment and MCZ Assessment for Schedule 5 Beachy Head East Marine Conservation Zone (Annex VII and VIII respectively) as recommended by the Technical Subcommittee on 27th June 2023.**

ALL RESOLVED to accept recommendation iii

- iv. That in accordance with Defra's published 'IFCA Byelaw Guidance' the Authority commences a public, formal consultation in respect to Schedule 5 Beachy Head East Marine Conservation Zone, before September 2023.**

ALL RESOLVED to accept recommendation iv

Information Items

8 Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy

- 8.1 The Chief Fisheries and Conservation Officer, Rob Pearson, provided an update on SxIFCA's Health, Safety and Wellbeing policy to members, highlighting that it was meeting the obligations and responsibilities regarding the legislative requirements for employees. He explained that the document is thorough and therefore large so was not included in the meeting pack, though this can be made available on request should members prefer to review.
- 8.2 Rob Pearson commented on Deputy Chief, Angharad Purcell and the Senior Managements work on reviewing this policy; this had highlighted some shortfalls such as training which have now been addressed.
- 8.3 Rob Pearson also advised the initiation of 6 monthly Health, Safety and Wellbeing meetings which will allow SxIFCA to strategically review this policy.

9 Fishery Management Plans

- 9.1 Rob Pearson updated members on the frontrunner consultations that are now live and close on 1st October 2023. Each of the plans have an interest to the district and therefore we regard engagement with the FMP as valuable not only to influence inshore but also offshore management measures. He encouraged all members to respond to this individually.
- 9.2 Rob Pearson said that SxIFCA are still reviewing the documents but suggested a collective response on behalf of the Authority, which he plans to draft and circulate to members to review prior to submission via email due to the deadline.
- 9.3 Prof. Peter Jones proposed that we agree to delegate this to the technical Subcommittee to review for submission due to time constraints.
- 9.4 Cllr. Julia Hilton asked if the management is introduced outside the six-mile limit, would this prevent significant overfishing outside the district.
- 9.5 Paul Johnson responded to confirm there is considerable enforcement outside the six-mile limit, which is managed by the MMO and objected to the comment that there is no enforcement offshore. He, however, added that the FMP's will influence the offshore management.
- 9.6 Rob Pearson advised that there is a letter request from AIFCA to support a national IFCA response to the consultations, contributing to a consultation review project and focusing on the two frontrunner FMPs which are Crab & Lobster and Whelk. The request is for two members from each IFCA,

preferably those with a strong interest in either of the two frontrunners, to conduct a video interview, which will then be part of a film presented at a workshop in Poole on 26th -27th September. It has also been asked that two additional members attend the workshop, along with Defra and MMO representatives to aid the review and analysis from the project.

- 9.7 Rob Pearson stated that Dr Paul Driver and Gary Edwards had both registered their interest in participating in the video interviews.
- 9.8 Prof. Peter Jones asked members at this stage to approve that this is being delegated to the Technical Subcommittee to review the response. He also made comment to the participants for video interview as confirmed to be Dr Paul Driver and Gary Edwards with Prof. Paul Leonard and Prof. Peter Jones interested in attending the workshop on behalf of SxIFCA.
- 9.9 Andy Read cautioned members that this is six of forty-three FMP's and the sensitivities around some of these with the fishing community. He added it is a great opportunity to address a lot of long-standing issues but that it is contentious.

10 Conservation and Research Update

- 10.1 Dr George Balchin provided an update on the Conservation and Research Team's report and work progress over the quarter. He referred to the continued extensive collaborative work, education and engagement events, including Wild Beach Training, Sussex Sediment Workshop, Shoresearch.
- 10.2 Cllr Julia Hilton said she is very interested in the Shoresearch event, which she would like to conduct in St Leonards. She added that she would like member details for the Sussex Marine Coastal Forums. Dr George Balchin advised he would be able to help with details for both.
- 10.3 Prof. Paul Leonard gave thanks to the Conservation and Research team for all the extensive work they do. He added that the sediment work at Brighton Marina is still outstanding and would like further information on if the licencing will be revised.
- 10.4 Dr Paul Driver requested more information on the lobster and edible crab stock assessments using local fishermen to take measurements. He queried if they are measuring all they catch or solely what they land.
- 10.5 Dr Jen Lewis explained the Cefas stock assessments only take the landed measurements, though the hope is that one of SxIFCA research officers can collect further measurements at sea.
- 10.6 Dr George Balchin added that the enforcement officers are measuring lobster and crab on patrols as part of inspections and that data is being submitted to Cefas.

- 10.7 Paul Johnson made comment that previously when working 30 years ago for Sea Fisheries Inspections on behalf of Cefas, the measurement of lobster and crab at sea were historically carried out.
- 10.8 Gary Edwards highlighted that around 10 years ago they diverted fresh water into the Harbour and from his past experience he believes the lack of salt may be detrimental to the seagrass.

ALL RESOLVED to approve the report and appendices.

11 Compliance Report

- 11.1 Angharad Purcell asked members to take this Item mainly as read but drew members' attention to a few points within the Report. Highlighting we have 107 active Shellfish Permits (65 commercial and 42 recreational).
- 11.2 Angharad Purcell advised on the breakdown of the report by area and directed members to the new addition to number of commercial vessels to each area.
- 11.3 Angharad Purcell added that FPV Watchful went into refit this quarter but sea patrols were still conducted by utilising Merlin.
- 11.4 Angharad Purcell summarised by stating there were three verbal warnings issued, eleven official written warnings and four ongoing investigations.
- 11.5 Angharad Purcell concluded this compliance update by informing members that there are a total of seven warranted officers now for SxIFCA as the two newest IFCO's who started with us last year are now warranted. She also notified that all staff had carried out conflict resolution training.
- 11.6 Dr Paul Driver commended the use of the drone in Chichester Harbour.
- 11.7 Angharad Purcell added that drone patrols are carried out throughout the district and over SSSI sites as authorised by NE.

ALL RESOLVED to note the report.

12 Communications Report

- 12.1 Angharad Purcell introduced this item briefly but was happy for this to be taken as read, informing of the continued use of social media for communications with a wide demographic of stakeholders.

- 12.2 Angharad Purcell highlighted the extensive community engagement and partnership meetings that is an important aspect to our communications.
- 12.3 Prof. Paul Leonard mentioned [MEDIN](#) and how useful this would be in regards to data sharing.

ALL agreed to be taken as read.

13 Financial Performance Report Q2 2023/2024

- 13.1 Prof. Peter Jones explained the main Finance Subcommittee was held earlier and unfortunately Lucy Francis is unable to join the meeting today.
- 13.2 Rob Pearson advised members that Lucy Francis sends apologies. He spoke through the three reports presented at the earlier Finance Subcommittee meeting relating to 2022 – 2023 that were accepted and approved. He added that Plummer Parsons, the appointed accountants who carried out the internal audit and independent examination, reported positively on our financial records.
- 13.3 Rob Pearson added that the financial statements for the year were approved and in addition the management accounts for Q1 2023/24 were presented and discussed and no concerning variations from budget were reported.

ALL RESOLVED to approve the financial statement and quarter budget report.

14 Vessel & Vehicle maintenance log

ALL RESOLVED to accept the report.

15 Chief Officers Group

- 15.1 Rob Pearson introduced this agenda item with a brief overview making reference to the latest COG minutes included in the annex for members to read through. He said that it was useful forum as a new CFCO to be involved in monthly meetings with fellow Chief Officers to gain insight and experience from.

- 15.2 Rob Pearson highlighted the recent development of a National IFCA training programme, which he explained had previously been conducted by one full time employment through AIFCA. This has now changed and COG are now looking to initiate a national group of representatives from each IFCA to share resource and management, as well as considering further options such as linking in with MMO training opportunities. He added that himself and Angharad Purcell were continuing to be involved in this training initiative and continue to work with COG on this.
- 15.3 Prof Peter Jones thanked Rob Pearson and asked members if there were any questions regarding this item.

ALL RESOLVED to accept the report.

16 Association of Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities

- 16.1 Rob Pearson updated members that the AIFCA AGM was held on 6th June at Fishmongers Hall. Tony Tomlinson and Les Weller were voted in as Chair and vice Chair respectively. Otherwise, business was conducted as represented in the appended minutes.
- 16.2 Rob Pearson further informed members that Dr Sarah Coulthard based at Newcastle University, presented a project proposal to AIFCA members, which looks to capture and collate evidence from all 10 IFCA's and use the information to demonstrate and evidence IFCA's ability to deliver fisheries co-management, capturing current capacity and identify key requirements to strengthen this capacity. The project was supported by the AIFCA, and SxIFCA were happy to welcome Sarah at the Shoreham office, where she conducted interviews with our staff to feed into the project.
- 16.3 Rob Pearson concluded by mentioning that the MMO governance team attended the AGM and gave an update on the IFCA membership campaign and recruitment process, which led to the recruitment of our newest member, Julian Seaman.

ALL RESOLVED to note the report.

17 A.O.B.

- 17.1 Prof. Peter Jones asked members if they had any other business to raise to which he went round the meeting room.

- 17.2 Tim Dapling gave a brief update on the current byelaws going through quality assurance and confirmation. The 'Minimum Size Byelaw' and 'Hand Gathering Byelaw' are still undergoing Q&A with the MMO and the IFCA are currently awaiting a response. The Netting Permit Byelaw remains with Defra and there are continuing communications with officials regarding amendments introduced following responses received during the statutory consultation process.
- 17.3 Prof. Paul Leonard advised that SxIFCA had supported his attendance to the Sussex Crustacean Sediment Workshop and made reference to a PFD report that is available on this.
- 17.4 The Chair, Prof. Peter Jones concluded with a final ask for any other business from members thereafter declaring the meeting was closed.

18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 18.1 26th October 2023.