

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
SUSSEX INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY  
HELD AT UNIT 12a RIVERSIDE BUSINESS CENTRE, SHOREHAM-BY-SEA  
On 17<sup>th</sup> May 2013**

**PRESENT**

SUSSEX IFCA:

***Members***

Tony Delahunty (MMO Appointee) Vice Chairman  
Councillor Janet Mockridge (West Sussex County Council)  
Graham Furness (MMO Appointee)  
Steve Hanks (MMO Appointee)  
Charles Bacchus (Environment Agency)  
Audrey Jones (Natural England)  
Peter Jones (MMO Appointee)  
James Partridge (MMO Appointee)  
Stewart Harper (MMO Appointee)  
Emma Kelman, (Natural England)  
Councillor Ollie Sykes (Brighton & Hove County Council)  
David Guy (MMO Appointee)  
Roger Thomas, ex-Chairman, joined the meeting briefly  
Sean Ashworth (Strategic Marine Manager for the Environment Agency ) joined the meeting for Item 15

***Staff***

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

Tim Dapling introduced the meeting by briefly discussing the changes in local council membership, which had resulted in the departure of Cllr Roger Thomas, Cllr John Livings and Cllr Nicola Waight. Cllr David Rogers had retired too, he added. He then handed over to Sussex IFCA's outgoing chairman, Roger Thomas, for his farewell speech.

Roger Thomas praised the present team at Sussex IFCA as being the best team he had ever worked with. He reminisced that since Tim's arrival there had been many changes, resulting in Sussex IFCA becoming a model for other IFCAs.

Roger regretted the manner of his departure and said that he had wished to remain as Chairman until the IFCA had been operating for at least 4 years. Roger Thomas said that the general election of 2015 could have effects on all IFCAs, and that

partnership is the key word for the future and Sussex IFCA had a good diversity of committee membership.

Many members had yet to be allocated committee membership following the elections, Roger said, and he was happy and confident to leave his deputy, Tony Delahunty, as Acting Chairman until new appointments were agreed. He thanked everyone for their support, and said that he was overwhelmed by the messages of goodwill he had received, including those from Richard Benyon MP and Lord Chris Smith. Finally, he wished Rob Clark good luck in his new job as Chief Fisheries Officer at Southern IFCA.

### **171. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

171.1 Apologies for absence were received from Paul Johnson, Paul Leonard, Joe Watt and Robert Yorke.

171.2 Jim Partridge asked if Keith Schofield would be joining the meeting. Tim Dapling replied that Keith Schofield was the new appointee, however, he had been unavailable, when invited, to attend the meeting.

171.3 Normally, Tim Dapling explained, a new Chairman and Vice Chairman would be appointed at the first meeting of the financial year, but in the present situation council members had not yet been appointed to various Authority positions. We were therefore short in terms of membership, not having, for instance, any representatives of East Sussex County Council. It was therefore proposed that Tony Delahunty took on the role of Acting Chair until the next meeting in July, allowing new members to participate in the process of electing a new Chairman and Vice Chairman. Steve Hanks pointed out that new councillors will not know the people involved. Tim Dapling replied that it was perhaps more likely that an existing member would be appointed. It was unanimously agreed to accept the recommendations and appoint Tony Delahunty as Acting Chair until the July meeting.

### **172. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

172.1 James Partridge declared his interest in Item 21 and intended leaving the room at the commencement of this Item.

172.2 Tony Delahunty declared he was aware of no prejudicial or pecuniary issues arising from his status as Area Representative for the South East Committee of the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations (NFFO).

172.3 Cllr. Sykes declared he was aware of no prejudicial or pecuniary issues arising from his employment with the Environment Agency.

172.4 David Guy declared he was aware of no prejudicial or pecuniary issues arising from his status as sole director of, "Alert 2020 Services Ltd".

### **173. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

173.1 Proposed by Tony Delahunty and seconded by Cllr. Sykes: Approved.

#### **173.2 Matters Arising**

173.4 Tim Dapling welcomed Erin Pettifer, the new Marine Protected Area Officer, he said that she had immersed herself in the role for the last three months, with great success.

173.4 168.1 Cefas and Defra came along to a meeting about shellfish stocks with members and Sussex IFCA personnel, he thanked everyone for coming and Tony Delahunty reported that it had been a productive meeting.

173.6 155 Rob Clark thanked members for their comments on the Review of Management Measures and on 156 Public Consultation on Marine Conservation Zones.

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2013 as a correct record.

### **174 DECISION ITEMS**

#### **174.1 Standing Orders**

The Authority's Standing Orders are linked in to various other documents, Tim Dapling informed the meeting. Reflecting The Sussex IFCA Order include Local Authority Codes of Conduct, Defra Guidance, MMO Terms of Appointments and Nolan Principles. They are approved every other year when they are reviewed, agreed and accepted.

174.2 Tim Dapling said that there were potentially two amendments to the Standing Orders this year, one related to Section 16 and regarding the appointment of the Chairman, that stipulated that no chairman should have a prejudicial interest in the commercial or recreational sector. Tim suggested that this be removed to give more opportunities for members to take on the role. Audrey Jones agreed with the proposition but with the proviso that no one should abuse their position for personal gain. Tony Delahunty replied that with the strong committee that exists no detrimental decisions could or would be taken. Tim Dapling added that the Code of Conduct applied to all members including the Chairman.

Proposed by Steve Hanks and seconded by James Partridge: Approved.

174.3 The second amendment was Item 61, Tim Dapling said, regarding membership of the Finance Committee, it suggested that, as well as the local authority members, any member who holds a professional financial qualification might be considered as part of that subcommittee. The Standing Orders did not list which professional qualifications were needed,

James Partridge said. Tim suggested that a relevant qualification was required, specific to financial management. Robert Yorke, had been identified as a potential member, as he has a background in finance.

174.4 James Partridge said that it was only proper that the local authorities have a majority, but that it was important that the MMO Appointees should have a representative there and at the moment this was only Tony Delahunty, Vice Chairman. One MMO representative must be on the committee, James insisted, and he proposed that it be included in the Standing Orders that if neither the chairman nor the vice chairman of the meeting were MMO Appointees, another MMO Appointee must be invited to be a member of the Finance Subcommittee.

Proposed by James Partridge and seconded by Steve Hanks: Approved

174.5 James Partridge did not understand No.9 of the Standing Orders. Tim Dapling explained it to him and suggested it would be amended for clarity.

174.6 Steve Hanks asked for confirmation that Sussex IFCA's members' quarterly committee meetings could be observed by members of the public. Tim Dapling affirmed this was the case unless confidential, sensitive material was being discussed. It was noted that the same did not apply to subcommittee meetings.

## **175. Authority Subcommittee Membership**

175.1 Tim Dapling suggested that existing subcommittees should remain with membership unchanged, if members agreed; when new members joined the authority in July, they would be able to take up subcommittee membership.

175.2 Audrey Jones requested she be added to the Technical and Byelaw Subcommittee membership. All agreed.

175.3 David Guy asked to be added to the Compliance Subcommittee. All agreed.

175.4 James Partridge asked if the Sussex IFCA was totally autonomous from the MMO on finance issues. Tim Dapling confirmed that we were autonomous from MMO and received new burdens monies from DEFRA.

## **176. Sussex IFCA Annual Plan 2013-2014**

176.1 Tim Dapling said that this item had been included to formally approve the final Plan document which had been sent to Defra and the Secretary of State. He invited members to comment.

176.2 Tim Dapling reported that many copies had been sent out to key partner organisations and encouraged members to raise the profile by circulating further copies.

176.3 Cllr. Sykes asked if Sussex IFCA had receives any comments from the Secretary of State on the Report, Tim Dapling said that he had had positive informal feedback, at this point. The Plan was positively received.

176.3 ALL RESOLVED to accept the final Plan.

### **177. Research Plan**

177.1 Kathryn Nelson introduced the report documenting planned research activities for 2013/2014.

177.2 Tony Delahunty thanked both Kathryn and Emma Kalman for their valuable work on the project at Selsey.

177.3 Cllr. Sykes asked if Kathryn Nelson would talk through the rationale behind changes made to future research work plans. Kathryn said that crab and lobster sampling was being carried out to support CEFAS and the whelk project had now finished.

177.4 Rob Clark explained further, that there were three priorities for the year ahead: sustainable exploitation of fish stocks, ecosystem interactions and socio-economics. The first priority was to provide the evidence base to inform future management decisions in relation to the sustainable exploitation of fish stocks. The second was to identify the key fish and shellfish resources in the local marine environment. The third priority was to use economics in the study of society, an important consideration in developing sustainable management of the marine environment. Cefas processed all the data supplied to provide indicators of sustainability, he said, and this, in turn, enabled Sussex IFCA to have a better picture of the fishery so that an evidence based plan of action could be made.

177.5 Cllr. Sykes asked if there was any tension between those research projects which brought money in and those which did not. Rob Clark denied there was a 'tension', but added that funded projects did sometimes take away resources from other research projects. The balance was good despite this, he said, and the two were complementary. Steve Hanks said that evidence gathered for one project was often useful elsewhere.

177.6 Charles Bacchus thanked Kathryn Nelson for contacting the Environment Agency initially and enabling a combined effort and information gathering for the small fish survey. Tim Dapling said that partnerships stood out from the report as being a very successful part of Sussex IFCA's research work and would continue to do so.

177.7 ALL RESOLVED to accept the Research Plan.

## **178. Review of Management Measures Report**

- 178.1 Tim Dapling took the opportunity to thank Ian Jones for his contribution to this report and welcomed him to his new role as Deputy Chief Fisheries Officer, which will commence on 1<sup>st</sup> June.
- 178.2 Rob Clark said that Sussex IFCA had produced a public-facing byelaw booklet, which had been widely distributed and 3 meetings had been held to ask for feedback, one at Hastings, one at Selsey and one at Sussex IFCA offices. By embarking on this consultation, he said, Sussex IFCA were now ahead of other IFCAs as this consultation had to be completed by 2015.
- 178.3 Ian Jones handed round copies of the booklet produced. The consultation process had taken two months, he said. All fishermen had been emailed and invited to attend the meetings and supply feedback. Ian thanked the members who had supported this process. The feedback had been collected through a questionnaire which was on the website as well as being available in hard copy. Post-it notes had been employed for those not wishing to fill in questionnaires, there had also been a power point presentation. The process ended on 30<sup>th</sup> April. The feedback had been much as anticipated, Ian Jones said, and he brought the members' attention to an Appendix supplied them, which displayed a Summary of Comments received.
- 178.4 There had been a fairly good response, Ian reported. 'Fishing News' had featured the process on their front page. Looking forward, Rob Clark said, the subcommittee were recommended to go through the responses in greater detail, produce a plan and implement it. Ian Jones proposed to send out meeting dates next week for the subcommittee.

178.2 RESOLVED to note the items.

## **179. Chichester Harbour Eel Grass Byelaw**

- 179.1 Tim Dapling introduced the report and said that discussions had previously taken place and been presented to the Authority about European Marine site management and Defra's 'change of approach' to how it wished to see European marine sites managed in regard to fishing activities. There was pressure on Defra to provide solutions, and IFCAs had started to provide these solutions for them.
- 179.2 The key paper from Defra, Tim said, was '*Revised Approach to the Management of Commercial Fisheries in European Marine Sites*', this policy and delivery document stated how Defra saw the IFCA's role in the management of these activities in its district. This had been progressed through an implementation group which included the IFCAs, the industry,



conservation authorities and Defra, and which had sought to find a process to identify high risk activities requiring immediate management.

- 179.3 Erin Pettifer showed the site specific matrix to Chichester Harbour and the red risk areas. Tim Dapling said that the specific risk issues in regard to eel grass beds were mobile fishing gears, hand gathering and bait digging. The associated draft byelaw being drawn up is included in the report, to provide the authority with a description of the direction that IFCA is taking toward meeting EMS management needs and byelaw development. Tim said that we were seeking the support of the authority to proceed with the process.
- 179.4 Steve Hanks asked why eel grass was important and not individual species. Erin Pettifer said that eel grass was internationally recognised as providing a nursery area and spawning ground for different fish species, had biodiversity importance, contained carbon stores and its multiple use supported both the fishing industry and tourism.
- 179.5 Cllr. Sykes said that he was struck by the fact that eel grass is three times as valuable as coral in the eco system.
- 179.6 Ian Jones said that we have good intelligence for Chichester Harbour and there were good chances for Southern IFCA to work in conjunction with Sussex IFCA as there were joint powers in operation over the harbour. Erin Pettifer said that both she and Kathryn Nelson would be carrying out further surveys this summer.
- 179.7 Steve Hanks asked if there were any other species in the area which would require similar management. Rob Clark said that this report was just the beginning of the process and that there were amber areas to be dealt with, but there would be more time to deal with these. Rob thanked Natural England for coming up with a solution for managing the eel grass.
- 179.7 ALL RESOLVED to support the report.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **180. Research Report**

- 180.1 Kathryn Nelson introduced the report. Steve Hanks asked if the Angling Survey was included in it. Online and face to face interviews had all been carried out, Kathryn said, with ongoing charter boat work being carried out until the middle of this year. 108 sites were visited, with 268 anglers interviewed, she went through the findings. Final reports would be issued later in the year, Kathryn said. Tim Dapling thanked Kathryn for all her hard work.
- 180.2 ALL RESOLVED to note the report.

## **181. Compliance and Enforcement Report**

181.1 Ian Jones presented his report. James Partridge questioned the boarding numbers being so low and he also said that he thought that Sussex IFCA was not using its assets to the best advantage. Ian Jones said that there were a variety of reasons why the number of sea patrols had varied, for instance, in March the officers had been heavily involved with the Review of Management Measures consultation process. The Officers had a variety of work to carry out, not just compliance, he said, but also administration and support for research work. Ian said that weather was an important factor in whether sea patrols took place or not and that there had been some good results from road patrols, and priorities had been balanced given the staff available.

181.2 Charles Bacchus said that sea conditions at the beginning of the year would have made it difficult for 'Watchful' to go out, and now the same queries had been made to the Environment Agency's small enforcement team.

181.3 Ian Jones continued by explaining the prosecutions which had taken place. The next Compliance Subcommittee meeting will be arranged by Ian and the participants will be emailed.

181.4 ALL RESOLVED to note the report.

## **182. SCHIP II 'Sussex Undersea'**

182.1 The Environment Agency had given resources to pull together a number of years' work on this exciting project, Rob Clark said. They would be creating a Sussex-wide habitat map, an open resource which displayed the location and extent of certain features. It was a helpful resource for both developers and the fishing industry. He went through its development. The Sussex Biosphere Records Centre, managed by Sussex Wildlife Trust, will consolidate, standardise and rationalise the IFCA data, update it and provide training to personnel. Kathryn Nelson had been putting information together and uploading to Youtube.

182.2 RESOLVED to note the report.

## **183. Marine Conservation Zone Response**

183.1 The purpose of the report was to note the response which was developed by the Subcommittee to the Marine Conservation Zone process. It was a robust and rounded response, Rob Clark said, following lengthy discussion and identified what issues the committee had had and how to proceed.

183.2 RESOLVED to note the report.



#### **184. Chichester Harbour Small Fish Survey**

184.1 Kathryn Nelson reported on the rationale, resources and revision of the small fish survey at Chichester Harbour. She highlighted the importance of the MCZ and gathering data. There were 3 types being surveyed this year and she continues to work with other agencies. Steve Hanks enquired if Cefas carried out a small fish survey in the area too, Kathryn Nelson replied that it was a young fish survey only.

184.2 Steve Hanks asked if the survey was just small fish and not juveniles of other species, Kathryn replied that it was both, and all species collected were recorded. She invited anyone interested to accompany her on one of the many surveys she is carrying out across the region.

RESOLVED to note the report.

#### **185. Catchment Plans, Coastal Fora and Local Nature Partnerships**

185.1 Tim Dapling introduced Sean Ashworth, Strategic Marine Manager for the Environment Agency, to the meeting at this point. Catchment planning is being rolled out across Sussex, Tim said. Sean Ashworth said that his new role in the south east was to improve work in the marine environment, joining up the Environment Agency's own work and increasing operating partnerships. Marine catchment planning didn't yet match the freshwater catchment planning, Sean said.

185.2 The Adur & Ouse catchment planning initiative had been a Defra pilot initiative, arguably the most successful in the country, Sean Ashworth said, due largely to Sussex IFCA's work.

185.3 Local Nature Partnership was a new initiative, Tim Dapling explained, being led and chaired by Tony Whitbread at Sussex Wildlife Trust, it seeks partnership across the conservation arena in Sussex. Sussex IFCA had been asked to be involved. The executive was in the process of being formed and Sussex IFCA was involved in this, with Tim Dapling as a member.

185.4 Erin Pettifer said that a coastal forum was being set up as Sussex had not had one previously. It will feed in to the Local Nature Partnerships, she said.

185.5 Rob Clark said that the Local Nature Partnership was in place to oversee all the partnerships already in place, to own them and manage them.

RESOLVED to note and support the items.

## **186 Panache Report**

186.1 Rob Clark said that the project was up-and-running. A helpful steering group meeting had been held in Plymouth, Professor Paul Leonard and Tony Delahunty had represented this authority. Erin Pettifer and Ian Jones had compiled two reports bringing together best practice in Marine Protected Area monitoring and compliance. Reports will be circulated.

RESOLVED to note the items.

## **187. Summary of expenditure from 1st April 2011 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013**

187.1 Catherine Holcombe went through the report, starting with the balance sheet and then asked for questions. The reserves were in place for emergencies, she said.

187.2 James Partridge asked how long the lease was on Highdown House. Tim Dapling replied that it ran out in 2015 but subsequently we had found tenants who had moved in at the beginning of April. With new tenants there remains a small financial liability; currently the tenancy is under 'licence' while Sussex IFCA seeks superior landlord consent, on receipt of which Highdown House will be reassigned.

RESOLVED to note the report.

## **188. Association of Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority**

188.1 Tim Dapling briefly discussed the last meeting held in March, which had been in the presence of the Minister and senior officials from Defra. The Minister had been very supportive of IFCAs and the main issue discussed had been European marine site management. Two other new Chief Officers had taken up posts, as well as Rob Clark becoming Chief Executive Officer at Southern IFCA.

RESOLVED to note the items.

## **189. Vessel and Vehicle Maintenance log for quarter**

189.1 RESOLVED to note the report.

**190. Correspondence concerning new and non-permitted fishing method**

- 190.1 James Partridge left the meeting. Tim Dapling said that the report documented correspondence between James Partridge and Sussex Sea Fisheries Committee and, subsequently, Sussex IFCA. Mr Partridge had requested that the correspondence be included in this meeting for discussion. The correspondence concerned any new and non-permitted method of fishing that could be introduced into the area but would require a change in byelaw legislation. Under the existing fishing instruments byelaw regime, ring nets are not a permitted method of fishing. There then followed a discussion concerning the relevant correspondence.
- 190.2 Members concluded that the generic question was 'How did the authority wish to approach dealing with approaches to develop new fisheries with fishing methods not currently permitted?' Tim Dapling said that a process was valuable to respond to the development of sustainable fisheries and needed to recognise appropriate duties and guidance to IFCAs. The report recommended that the matter be referred to the Technical Subcommittee to evaluate the information and develop a suitable process.
- 190.3 ALL RESOLVED To support the recommendation to develop an approach to the assessment of new non permitted fishing methods that reflects IFCA duties, Defra guidance and supports and links into the existing Review of Management Measures. That the process should be progressed in a timely way to provide a process.

**191. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 191.1 Tim Dapling explained what events were to follow the meeting, including presentations to Roger Thomas and Rob Clark, speeches and the naming of 'Merlin' by the ex-chairman's wife, Jenny Thomas.

**192. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- 192.1 Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> July 2013 – venue 12a Riverside.

**193. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- 193.1 Approved by Acting Chairman

Tony Delahunty

