

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
SUSSEX INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
HELD AT UNIT 12a RIVERSIDE BUSINESS CENTRE, SHOREHAM-BY-SEA
On 24th July 2014**

PRESENT

SUSSEX IFCA:

Members

Tony Delahunty (MMO Appointee) Chairman
Councillor Ollie Sykes (Brighton & Hove County Council) Vice Chairman
Graham Furness (MMO Appointee)
Steve Hanks (MMO Appointee)
Paul Johnson (MMO Representative)
James Partridge (MMO Appointee)
Paul Leonard (MMO Appointee)
Councillor Nigel Peters (West Sussex County Council)
Councillor Janet Mockridge (West Sussex County Council)
Stewart Harper (MMO Appointee)
Keith Schofield (MMO Appointee)
Charles Bacchus (Environment Agency)
Joe Watt (MMO Appointee)
David Guy (MMO Appointee)

Staff

Tim Dapling (Chief Fisheries & Conservation Officer)
Ian Jones (Deputy Chief Fisheries & Conservation Officer)
Catherine Holcombe (Finance Manager)
Andy McMahon (Senior Fisheries & Conservation Officer)
Erin Pettifer (MPA Officer)
Kathryn Nelson (Fisheries and Conservation Research Officer)
Rachel Griffin (Committee Manager & Personal Assistant)

Invitees

Olle Akesson (Wildlife Trust)
Emma Kalman (Natural England)

Tony Delahunty welcomed all members and Tim Dapling introduced the agenda. Ian Jones spoke of the progression of Alice Tebb and Matt Wiseman over the last year from Trainee Fisheries and Conservation Officers to fully trained and warranted Fisheries Officers. He congratulated them on behalf of the Authority and asked Tony Delahunty to present them with their warrant cards.

268. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Audrey Jones (Natural England)
Councillor John Hodges (East Sussex County Council)
Councillor Peter Pragnell (East Sussex County Council)

Charlie Hubbard (Marine Operations Manager)
Dr Peter Jones (MMO Appointee)
Robert Yorke (MMO Appointee)
Councillor John Ungar (East Sussex County Council)

269. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

269.1 Tony Delahunty declared his fishing interests and that he was Chairman of the NFFO South East Region.

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

270. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

270.1 Tim Dapling went through the minutes page by page. Keith Schofield commented that although the minutes represented an accurate record of discussions which took place, he did not feel that the draft letter to Defra (item 253) reflected the varying opinions of members as had been discussed. The Chairman said that this item would be fully discussed under 'Matters Arising'.

270.2 Approval proposed by Ollie Sykes and seconded by Paul Leonard.

271 **MATTERS ARISING**

271.1 The Chief Fisheries & Conservation Officer reported on Item 252, the Agreement for Chichester Harbour oyster management. This had been signed off by both authorities, Southern and Sussex IFCAs, was currently with Defra, and was due to be approved and returned imminently.

271.2 Tim Dapling discussed the draft letter to Defra regarding Beachy Head East, (Item 253) which he had substantially altered following the recommendations made at the previous committee meeting. Tim Dapling had circulated the letter to all members which he hoped reflected all points raised. Stewart Harper reiterated that he didn't see the need to send the letter at all and was of the opinion that once the MCZs were in place fishing would be shut down completely. Stewart Harper recommended that, if the letter was sent, it should read 'by majority decision' rather than 'the Authority strongly encourages'. Keith Schofield expressed his agreement with Stewart Harper's views.

272.3 Tim Dapling said that his redraft of the letter was at the Authority's instruction, reflecting the agreed recommendations from the last meeting. He would change the wording as requested by Stewart Harper, he said, if the members were now in agreement to do so. General discussion continued.

272.4 **The Proposition was as follows:**

To send the letter with a change of wording to read 'the majority of the Authority members encourage its inclusion in Tranche 3'.

Vote decision: seven members supported sending the letter with the change of wording and five were against sending it. The motion was carried and the letter would be sent. The members who disagreed with sending the letter were as follows: Paul Johnson, Keith Schofield, Joe Watt, Jim Partridge and Stewart Harper.

272.5 Tim Dapling informed members that Defra's call for evidence for the 4 year report on conduct and operations of the IFCAs could be accessed by links on the website, until the end of July.

273. **DECISION ITEMS**

273.1 **Membership and procedures (Register of Interests)**

273.2 Tim Dapling updated members on a meeting about MMO appointees which had been held between IFCA Chief Officers, the MMO executive and chairs. The current four year cycle of appointee membership was now coming to an end and a further appointment process was due in accordance with the MMO timetable. Following a review of the appointment timetable, it had been concluded that it was impossible to appoint circa 80 members by the end of October. The intention was to extend current membership by a further six months and to allow staggering of appointments for continuity and less collective impact from changes in future.

273.3 Tim Dapling itemised the correspondence received from and sent to Mr Brock, mainly concerning the declaration of interests of Dr. Peter Jones. The first letter had been received on 25th June from him, the Authority's reply had been sent on 1st July and a reply had been received back on 10th July. Copies of all correspondence were distributed to all members.

273.4 Tim Dapling had been in discussion with ESCC legal services and, as a result, it was recommended that a members' Register of Interests was published on the website. This would ensure further transparency and enhance existing compliance with regulations and procedures. Jim Partridge was not happy to have his interests published and therefore publicly available. Tim suggested that any members' concerns could be addressed individually and there was provision to exclude sensitive information as defined in the Code of Conduct.

MAJORITY RESOLVED to accept the recommendations.

274. **CHOPI and Chichester Oyster Fishery Management Update**

274.1 Ian Jones reported that a regular CHOPI meeting was held at Dell Quay Education Centre on 17 June 2014, the purpose of the meeting had been to provide an update on research and monitoring, an update on fisheries management in EMS and to discuss and approve a draft oyster permit byelaw.

274.2 The group was provided with a draft oyster permit and a summary of agreed regulatory management options. Each component of the byelaw was discussed and comments noted. Under an agreement made between the Authority and Southern IFCA, the proposed oyster management in Chichester Harbour would include that part of the District that lies within Southern IFCA.

274.3 Ian Jones said that the CHOPI was advised of the need for a contingency plan in place should an oyster permit byelaw not be confirmed before 1 November 2014, taking into consideration the formal consultation process and any need to make and agree any amendments.

274.4 The group agreed the following outcomes during the meeting: an agreement in principle on a byelaw framework and clauses; financial support for legal drafting; a contingency plan consisting of an extension of emergency byelaw closure and research work for stock assessment in September 2014.

274.5 The next steps were identified as:

- Draft byelaw agreed through technical subcommittee
- Consideration for legal drafting
- Recommendations to committee
- Making of the byelaw (possibility of through an emergency committee meeting)
- Implementation of contingency plan

274.6 Jim Partridge commented that oysters and whelks were to be found in unclassified waters and asked whether these stocks could not be moved to Chichester Harbour, for example, where stocks were low. He queried whether all areas should be classified as no moving of stock was currently possible.

274.7 There followed a discussion involving officers concerning the movement restrictions for shellfish between classified and unclassified area, the resources required to determine classification and what could be undertaken within the current regulatory regime.

- 274.8 Ian Jones said that the Blue Marine Project intended to seek regeneration of oyster stocks within the Solent and offered a significant opportunity.

ALL RESOLVED to accept the recommendations.

275. **Angling Strategy**

- 275.1 Tim Dapling introduced the report. It was well understood that in respect to recreational fishing activity (predominately angling) that some objectives of the sector could differ from those associated with commercial capture fisheries. Importantly, Tim Dapling said, recreational benefits were derived from the value of the experience, and not by the economic value of fish retained.
- 275.2 Tim Dapling said that the Review of Management issues had helped inform the Authority's priorities, however, anglers in the community were constantly in contact with concerns about management of fisheries and sustainable fisheries. A recent petition concerning pair trawling had been posted on the website and had been replied to by a joint response from The Chief Fisheries and Conservation Officer and the Chairman.
- 275.3 Many queries were being received by IFCA's nationwide, to help address this the Authority could develop a structured angling strategy, Tim Dapling said. The strategy could highlight existing work and potential opportunities and thereby improve communications.
- 275.4 Supported by the report, Tim Dapling recommended to members that the Authority agree to review existing angling strategies seek evidence and report to the Technical Subcommittee on a potential framework for a strategy.
- 275.5 General discussions took place: Steve Hanks said that anglers generally felt they were not involved enough in fisheries management. Joe Watt said that anglers needed educating on fishing methods. Keith Schofield said that commercial fishermen were keen to work with anglers on a UK and European strategy. Charles Bacchus said that it was more important to agree what would be included in a strategy.
- 275.6 Tim Dapling circulated research information on bass assessment, which made very bleak reading, as stocks were extremely low.

ALL RESOLVED to accept the recommendations.

A ten minute refreshment break took place.

INFORMATION ITEMS

276 Organisational Changes

- 276.1 Tim Dapling informed the meeting that Catherine Holcombe would be leaving the Authority and her last working day would be 7th August. Tim took the opportunity to thank her for her work over the last two years and the valued contribution she had made. Estelle Barton would be replacing Catherine as Finance Manager, also on a 0.4 FTE contract.
- 276.2 Andy McMahon was also leaving and was thanked for all he had done in the time he had been with the IFCA. Tim Dapling said that Andy had been very supportive of the trainees and Ian Jones in his year in post. Alberto Kavadellas would be acting up into the role of Senior Fisheries Officer for three months. Barry Goodhew, who had been a volunteer quite recently with a background in the forces and degree level education in fisheries from Sparsholt College, would be employed as Assistant Fisheries & Conservation Officer for a minimum of three months.

ALL RESOLVED to note the report.

277 Review of Management Measures Report

- 277.1 Ian Jones reported that a final draft Shellfish Permit Byelaw had been developed for the next Committee meeting via a successful email consultation with members. A consultation period had commenced on 19th June and had completed on 18th July, via multiple media outlets. The draft had been sent to the MMO for legal opinion and the next step was to supply the Technical Subcommittee with a summary of those outcomes. Ian Jones had sent out two doodle polls to arrange the Technical Subcommittee meeting in the next few weeks.
- 277.2 Tony Delahunty thanked those members who had attended the drop-in centre consultations.
- 277.3 Paul Leonard asked why some species of shellfish were not mentioned. Tim Dapling replied that both the key present and potential species had been identified and the byelaw content was future-proofed as far as practically possible. The specific shellfish were pot and trap caught species only, hence the absence of bivalve species.

ALL RESOLVED to note the report.

278 **Marine Conservation Zones Update**

- 278.1 Erin Pettifer reported that details on the prioritisation process undertaken with Sussex IFCA's MPA work had been provided at the previous Quarterly and Technical Sub-Committee meetings. Since April 2014 an IFCA MPA reporting tool had been developed to enable IFCAs to report on progress with their identified MPA priorities in a consistent and efficient way nationally to Defra and other government bodies. Erin explained the reporting tool and welcomed feedback from everyone, she said that Kent & Essex had contributed a lot to its development.
- 278.2 Erin Pettifer reported that the ground truthing survey at Kingmere MCZ site had now been completed following the side sonar scan research. Weather, gear and plankton bloom visibility issues had resulted in delays to the work.
- 278.3 The black bream floy and acoustic tagging surveys had also been completed, with data processing and analysis pending. Data collection on landings and effort with recreational and commercial fishers was ongoing. Erin Pettifer said that Natural England had been alerted to bream nests locations and had shot footage, the final assessment of which would be taking place imminently.
- 278.4 It had been a partnership project with Cefas to date with supporting funding from EON. Further resources would be needed for an outside contractor to analyse and interpret data.
- 278.5 Beachy Head West MCZ featured evidence collection which was progressing with the first phase of the SCHIP1 project habitat map due to be completed by the Channel Coastal Observatory (CCO). The Dungeness to Newhaven and Hove to Selsey seabed mapping and reporting had recently been received, Erin Pettifer said. Beachy Head West future funding was in question.
- 278.6 Steve Hanks asked about funding from Defra, Erin said that Defra were now concentrating on Tranche 2 and that any monies still required for Tranche 1 were being directed at T2 sites.
- 278.7 Keith Schofield said that fishermen had data collected over 25 years but the information had not been accepted as relevant. Keith said that it was positive that fishermen and other agencies could now work hand-in-glove on the Undersea project, amongst others, to verify their data. Paul Leonard said that Cefas held information under programmes he had initiated, which was freely available and that it was only necessary to request it.
- 278.8 Tim Dapling said that Cefas and the Authority were looking at trialling and comparing WASP and AGDS systems. This was a future project which had significant implications for obtaining data more widely.

- 278.9 Jim Partridge said that temperature logging on Kingmere Reef had been taking place and the resultant data had now been successfully downloaded during the bream season.
- 278.10 It was anticipated that Natural England draft Conservation Advice packages for Kingmere and Beachy Head West would be presented by Audrey Jones at the Authority's September Technical Sub-Committee meeting, Erin Pettifer said. The capturing and coding of CVM interviews by MCS was ongoing, and the draft film would be shown to members at the Technical Sub-Committee meeting too.

ALL RESOLVED to note the report.

279 **European Marine Sites Update**

- 279.1 Erin Pettifer briefly went through her report. Oyster dredging management within Chichester Harbour had been identified as one of the five MPA priorities within the Sussex IFCA district. Evidence collection to underpin Chichester Harbour oyster fishery management decisions were therefore a priority.
- 279.2 Working with the local Natural England (NE) representative, a national discussion had taken place between IFCAs and NE regarding oyster dredging impacts research requirements and the potential need to commission a joint research project. There had been unanimous agreement regarding evidence gaps and a joint research project between Southern, Sussex and Kent and Essex IFCAs, NE and the National Oceanography Centre had been agreed. A two year research bid for Defra under spend funding specifically assigned for fishing impacts evidence collection would be formulated in partnership.
- 279.3 Tim Dapling thanked Erin Pettifer for all the hard work she had input over recent months to meet MPA planning targets.

ALL RESOLVED to note the report.

280 **Research Report**

- 280.1 Kathryn Nelson went through the report which she and Erin Pettifer had written and highlighted several items to give a flavour of the work carried out, including Chichester Harbour Oyster Partnership Initiative, Sussex Seasearch and Hastings, Selsey and Sussex Undersea projects.
- 280.2 The interim report for the 1st six months of the financial year would be presented at the next quarterly committee meeting, Kathryn Nelson said.

- 280.3 Paul Leonard asked why neither the National Biodiversity Network nor MEDIN were mentioned in the Sussex Undersea (SCHIP II) report. Erin Pettifer said that all the meta data went to MEDIN.
- 280.4 Tony Delahunty thanked Kathryn Nelson for her report.

ALL RESOLVED to note the report.

281 **Compliance & Enforcement**

- 281.1 Andy McMahon said that in the absence of a subcommittee meeting had been held and he had emailed the report to members but had received no comments, he briefly went through it. Over the quarter there had been 5 verbal warnings and all had been for undersized spider crabs being used as bait.
- 281.2 There had been one offence report of an undulate ray and 10 individual lobster claws on board a vessel, the skipper had been interviewed under caution. This was an ongoing investigation, Ian Jones said.
- 281.3 Andy McMahon pointed out that emerging trends for compliance were undulate rays and undersized spider crabs.
- 281.4 David Guy asked who had attended the RSPB meeting and about local related issues. Andy McMahon said that he had attended and that there was evidence, in SW England primarily, of numbers of dead birds being found and an exchange of information on this subject was set to continue between areas.
- 281.5 Paul Johnson queried why the highest risks had smallest number of hours spent on them, Andy McMahon explained that bream tagging and MCZ survey work had taken additional officers' time but the highest risks had remained well monitored amongst all the other concerns in the Authority's area. Ian Jones suggested that the Compliance Subcommittee could review how risks are addressed. Tony Delahunty was going to Jersey to discuss the problems with undulate rays.

ALL RESOLVED to note the report.

282 **Communications Report**

ALL RESOLVED to note the report.

283 **Report by Paul Leonard from Plymouth Conference**

283.1 Paul Leonard said that the conference had involved Devon & Severn, Southern and Sussex IFCAs. Paul Gilliland, Head of Marine Planning at the MMO, had been invited to attend. Paul had asked why there had been no representative present from Defra, but had not received a satisfactory response. Paul Leonard had presented the conference with a poster he had taken with him, (now on display for the meeting) which explained the work of Sussex IFCA. The Chairman thanked Paul Leonard for his work and attending the conference for the Authority.

ALL RESOLVED to note the report.

284. **Summary of Expenditure for the 1st Quarter from 1st April to 30th June 2014**

284.1 Catherine Holcombe said that the Authority had made a good start to the current year financially: there had been £15k secured from EON for Kingmere MCZ research, and, minus expenses, there remained £17k.

284.2 The main surplus of £17k would probably reduce in the next quarter, in part because fuel costs were currently reduced owing to Charlie Hubbard having let the fuel run low because of an impending vessel lift out.

284.3 At the moment, Catherine said, it looked as though there could be a surplus available for reserves by the end of the year.

ALL RESOLVED to note the report.

285 **Vessel and Vehicle maintenance log 1st April to 30th June**

ALL RESOLVED to note the report.

286 **Association of Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities**

286.1 Tim Dapling presented the action minutes from the last meeting held on 17th June. MPA reporting, Defra's reporting expectations and delivery of MPA and MCZ management had been major topics for discussion.

286.2 Tim Dapling highlighted another issue which was that the Association was in the process of drafting a response to the proposed drift net ban on behalf of all the IFCAs.

287 **Chief Officers Group**

287.1 Tim Dapling brought the members' attention to a letter which had been sent to Nigel Gooding, Chris Preston and Kath Cameron. He said that the letter summarised the IFCAs' position with regard to MPA management.

288. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

288.1 David Guy reported that consent had been granted for the Eon Rampion site and now Eon were in discussion on how to develop the site. Aggregate bream surveys were currently taking place. Tim Dapling asked if the members would welcome EON's participation at the next Quarterly Committee Meeting. All agreed that would be a good idea.

288.2 Jim Partridge requested to know exactly when the trawl headline length restriction Byelaw had been repealed.

289. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

289.1 Thursday 24th October 2014 – venue 12a Riverside.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Delahunty'.

Tony Delahunty
Chairman Sussex IFCA