

# NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

## MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

16 APRIL 2020

**Present**

Councillor Ron Allcock  
Dr Stephen Axford  
Councillor Edward Bell  
Kirsten Carter  
Prof Mike Elliott  
Councillor Chris Matthews  
Mr Gary Redshaw

**Representing**

North Lincolnshire Council  
MMO appointee  
Durham County Council  
MMO appointee  
MMO appointee  
East Riding of Yorkshire Council  
MMO appointee

Chief Officer Mr David McCandless, Clerk Caroline Lacey, East Riding of Yorkshire and Stephen Chandler East Riding of Yorkshire Council also attended the meeting.

Due to the restrictions associated with the Covid-19 pandemic, the meeting took place via a telephone conference dial in, the meeting commenced at 15:00.

<b>5.</b>	<b>APOLOGIES</b>
	Apologies for absence were received from Council Member Randerson.
<b>6.</b>	<b>DECLARATION OF PERSONAL OR PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS</b>
	<b>Resolved</b> – The Clerk asked Members to declare any personal or prejudicial interests with respect to items on the Agenda and the nature of such interests. No such interests were declared.
<b>7.</b>	<b>TO TAKE NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 05 FEBRUARY 2020 AS A CORRECT RECORD</b>
	<b>Resolved</b> – That the minutes of the meeting held on 05 February 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
<b>8.</b>	<b>NEIFCA ANNUAL PLAN 2020/2021</b>
	The Clerk and Chief Officer submitted a report detailing the draft Annual Plan for 2020/2021 and to authorise the drafting of an accompanying annual report, summarising Authority’s main activities and outputs during the 2019/2020 year. At the point of finalising the plan in March the Covid-19 pandemic had started to seriously impact the UK leading to the implementation of significant restrictions on businesses, infrastructure and movement. In response NEIFCA had had to modify its operations significantly in line with government guidelines.
	<b>Resolved</b> – (a) That members endorse the plan for 2020/2021 for submission to Defra. (b) That members authorise the drafting of an annual report, summarising the Authority’s main activities and outputs during the 2019/2020 year for submission to the June 2020 meeting of the Authority.

<b>9.</b>	<b>NEIFCA REPLACEMENT PATROL VESSEL</b>
	<p>The Chief Officer submitted a report to update members on progress with the project to replace the Authority's main patrol vessel. A full detailed background was included in the report for member's information. In order to move the project forward, officers were seeking endorsement, in line with the decisions taken by the full Authority on 10 September 2015, to progress a formal tender process in relation to the 9.5m Cabin RIB component of the project. Following the receipt and evaluation of tenders and further consultation with Authority members, it would be the intention to agree a contract with the preferred bidder to progress the build and commission of the RIB. The projected costs of building and commissioning the 9.5m cabin RIB were expected to range from £360 to £390K. Funding would be drawn from the vessel renewal fund with the potential to be supplemented from savings and funds drawn from the general reserve. Strategically this would bring an extremely valuable vessel asset into operation in advance of the sale of NEG III and the build and commission of a new main vessel, providing enhanced capability for safe, fast intercept work, particularly at night and in response to a developing threat from nomadic vessel operators.</p>
	<p><b>Resolved –</b> (a) That members note the report.  (b) That in accordance with the decision made by the Authority on 10 September 2015 members endorse the commencement of a formal tendering process to obtain a price for the build and commission of a cabin Rigid Inflatable Boat (RIB), one of the two 'daughter' crafts associated with the replacement project.  (c) That subject to receipt and evaluation of tenders and further consultation with Authority members, a contract is let for the purchase of a new cabin RIB.  (d) That a special meeting of the Executive Committee be convened to agree next steps surrounding the replacement of the main vessel.  (e) That the Clerk and Chief Officer seek a dispensation from Government to borrow monies to support the financing of the replacement of the main vessel.</p>
<b>10.</b>	<b>REVENUE BUDGET 2020/21</b>
	<p>The Treasurer provided members with a detailed budget for new 2020/21 financial year which had been produced in line with the draft 2019 Annual Plan, Strategic Risk Register and local priorities and in consultation with senior operational staff. Members had previously agreed a total levy of £1,285,536 at the Authority meeting held on 5 December 2019. The Authority's budget had been reviewed in detail by the Chief Officer and his senior management team, together with the Treasurer, to identify the level of expenditure necessary to meet operational priorities through to 31 March 2021. The draft budget incorporates the 5% levy increase approved at the Authority Meeting on 5 December 2019, to enable the successful completion of the staffing and organisational review. Approval was also sought to remove the £35,000 external projects supplementary budget, which was fully funded by external grants, following the completion of the scheme.</p>
	<p><b>Resolved –</b> a) That the draft budget for 2020/21 be approved  b) That the level of general reserves is maintained at £228,449 (18%) of the annual levy  c) That the £35,000 supplementary budget for external projects, fully funded by grants is removed from the 2020/21 budget following completion of the scheme.</p>
<b>11.</b>	<b>BUDGET REPORT 2019/20</b>
	<p>The Treasurer of the Authority presented a report detailing the budget position at the end of month 11 (February) in 2019/20. At the end of February 2020, the Authority had a net expenditure of £988,553 against an expected £1,063,055, underspending by £74,502. The forecast outturn underspend was £76,945 mainly due to employee underspends due to vacancies (£50,315) which would allow for the planned transfer of £102,900 plus accrued interest into the Renewals Fund and £10,000 into the Vehicle Replacement Reserve. At</p>

	<p>the end of the financial year it was proposed that the outturn underspend on employees is transferred to the General Reserve to support any pressures from implementing the staffing and organisational review and any remaining underspend transferred to the Renewals Fund to contribute towards the replacement of the patrol vessel. Based on the current projection the proposed transfer to the General Reserve at the year-end would be £44,679 and the proposed transfer to the Renewals fund would be £32,266.</p>
	<p><b>Resolved</b> – (a) That the budget monitoring position is noted;  (b) That a one year supplementary budget of £52,070 is approved for the Project Pincer-Next scheme in 2019/20 fully funded by European Maritime &amp; Fisheries (EMFF) grant;  (c) That the 2019/20 final outturn underspend on employees be transferred to the General Reserve and that any remaining underspend be transferred to the Renewals Fund</p>
<b>12.</b>	<b>NEIFCA ORGANISATIONAL REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE</b>
	<p>The Clerk and Chief Officer submitted a report to update members on progress with the implementation of the NEIFCA organisational review. Since the last meeting of the Executive Committee held on 5 February 2020 November work had continued on progressing the implementation of the recommendations contained within the 2019 report. A formal meeting was held with NEIFCA staff at Whitby on 27 February 2020 and chaired by the Clerk. Following the meeting NEIFCA staff were sent copies of their job profiles for review and comment alongside further information on the Greater London Provincial Council (GLPC) job evaluation scheme to be utilised by Cornwall County Council (CCC) as part of the process. Whilst CCC had advised that the job evaluation work had been impacted to some degree by Covid-19 issues they were expecting it to be completed before the 16 April in time for the meeting. Unfortunately, given the intervening Easter break on top of the ongoing impacts of Covid-19, this had not been possible. The Chair requested that following receipt of the outputs from CCC a video conference meeting be arranged for Executive Committee members to discuss the findings.</p>
	<p><b>Resolved</b> – (a) That Members note the report.  (b) That once the outputs from the Job Evaluation process, undertaken by Cornwall County Council, are received and reviewed, a further meeting of the Executive Committee be arranged to progress the implementation.</p>
<b>13.</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY &amp; STRATEGIC &amp; OPERATIONAL RISK REGISTER REVIEWS</b>
	<p>In accordance with the Risk Management Strategy an annual review had been undertaken. The Clerk and Chief Officer presented the revised Strategy to Members for their consideration and approval. The Strategic and Operational Risk Registers had been reviewed to consider any potential changes which have occurred over the last six months and affected the key risks identified within the Registers. The next review of the Strategic Risk Register would normally be scheduled for September 2020 but given the uncertainties surrounding the impacts of the associated with the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic they would remain under weekly review. The identified risks had also been ranked in order of significance (highest residual risk score). Considerations surrounding the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly relating to operational risk remained at the forefront alongside more strategic risks associated with staffing vacancies, funding for a replacement patrol vessel and implications surrounding the 2019 Organisational Review.</p>
	<p><b>Resolved</b> – That the revised Risk Management Strategy be adopted and the revised Strategic and Operational Risk Register be approved and reviewed in six months' time.</p>

<b>14.</b>	<b>NEIFCA HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY &amp; SAFE WORKING PRACTICES 2020/2021</b>
	<p>The Chief Officer provided a report to inform members of the completion of the annual review of the Authority's Health &amp; Safety provisions; a revised policy was included within the report. The Chief Officer reported that policy and provisions were reviewed continuously throughout the year at NEIFCA staffing and Senior Management Team meetings and the guidance documents represented the most current version at the time the report was written. Since the last review in November 2019 the Chief Officer advised that there had been no notable incidents or accidents to report whilst staff had been working. Over and above the standard operational risk assessments and associated safe working practices, NEIFCA officers had responded rapidly to the unprecedented impacts and risks associated with the worsening Covid-19 pandemic. In managing these impacts an overarching set of Covid-19 specific risk assessments had been developed alongside a set of supporting control measures. These were being strictly followed by all staff alongside the standard safe operational practices when working. These additional systems were dynamic, subject to daily review and would be amended to take account of any changes in risk and or governmental advice. Members requested assurance that sufficient plans were in place in terms of PPE and the availability of face masks and gloves for all officers.</p>
	<b>Resolved</b> – (a) Members noted the report.
<b>15.</b>	<b>NEIFCA PERMITTED INTERTIDAL NETTING FISHERY 2019/20</b>
	<p>The Chief Officer provided a report to update members on the current situation surrounding the issuing of intertidal fixed netting permits to target sea bass and ongoing legislative conflict with European Fisheries provisions. A new Council Regulation, (EU) 2020/123, was published on 27 January 2020 which had maintained the longstanding prohibition governing the commercial fishing for sea bass from the shore and as a result no intertidal sea bass permits had been issued for the 2019/2020 season. The Chief officer advised that the situation would remain under review and a further report would be presented to the full Authority at its meeting in December 2020. The Authority's legal advice remained unchanged, that unless the current prohibition on commercial fishing for sea bass from the shore was removed from the legislative framework no permits should be issued.</p>
	<p><b>Resolved</b> – (a) That Members note the report.  (b) That given the continuation of the European ban on commercial sea bass fishing from the shore, no intertidal permits are issued.  (c) That the situation surrounding intertidal permits remains under review.</p>
<b>16.</b>	<b>EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC</b>
	<p>That the public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of the following item (Minutes 17) on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information defined in Paragraphs 8 and 9 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.</p>
	<b>Resolved</b> – that the public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of the following item (minutes 17).
<b>17.</b>	<b>MEMBERSHIP OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF IFCAS</b>
	<p>The Chief Officer presented a report to update Members on recent changes within the national Association of IFCAs and to take a decision on the status of the NEIFCA's</p>

	<p>continued membership. A background on the AIFCA format and creation was detailed in the report for members information.</p> <p>Alongside the other IFCA's, with the exception of the Isles of Scilly, NEIFCA currently contributed £12K per annum from its annual budget to support the running of AIFCA. Issues and concerns surrounding the functioning of AIFCA and value for money began to surface in 2017 leading to the formal resignation of Devon and Severn IFCA.</p> <p>In recognition of the developing internal concerns surrounding the functioning and effectiveness of AIFCA an independent review was instigated during 2018 which carried NEIFCA's full support. The report noted the extent of member dissatisfaction surrounding the Association and outlined a set of priority recommendations designed to improve its functioning and effectiveness. Whilst the implementation of the review was progressing further concerns came to light and having discussed the matter further with the Clerk, Chair and Vice Chair, the Chief Officer formally resigned as a Director of AIFCA on 9 January 2020.</p> <p>The Chief Officer advised members that the Chief Executive of AIFCA had tendered his resignation but concerns still remained.</p> <p>Members were informed that officers were currently in receipt of invoices covering AIFCA subscriptions for the 2020/2021 year but these had not been processed pending the Executive Committee's decision.</p> <p>Members discussed the Authority's continued membership of the National Association of IFCA's in detail, debating its effectiveness and questioning its actual value for money, and consensus was that during the current climate, in terms of Brexit and the need for a coherent national voice, it was agreed that the Authority should pay for the 2020/21 membership, with a full report to be taken to the December Authority meeting. Members also requested that the Chair of the AIFCA be made fully aware of the Authority's feelings and the content of the discussions which had taken place, and the uncertainty surrounding continued membership after 2020/21.</p>
	<p><b>Resolved</b> – (a) That Members note the report  (b) That NEIFCA pays its 2020/2021 subscription for one year, pending the recruitment of a new Chief Officer, with a formal review undertaken again in March 2021, confirmed in writing with the Chair of AIFCA.  (c) The Chief Officer notifies the Chair of the AIFCA expressing the Authority's concerns and uncertainty over continued membership after 2020/21, and concerns raised over value for money, with a full report to be taken to the December Authority meeting.</p>
<b>18.</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>
	<p>The Chair suggested that due to ongoing Covid 19 pandemic, the June Authority meeting date should be postponed until September, with all options considered in terms of teleconferencing and video conferencing. A meeting of the Executive Committee will be held on the original date of the June Authority meeting.</p>
	The meeting closed at 16:40