

PRESENT: NIFCA Members:

Mr G R Arckless (Chairman), Mr L Weller (Vice Chairman), Mr M Bould (MB), Mr B Burdis (BB), Mrs C Hedley (CH), Mr D Herriott (DH), Mr S Lowe (SL), Mr B Pidcock (BP), Professor N Polunin (NP), Mr S Ritchie (SR), Mr N Robinson (NR), Mr J Stephenson (JS), Mr I Thomas (IT), Mr D Watkin (DW), Mr J Woodman (JW).

Also in attendance were the NIFCA Chief Executive Officer Mr M H Hardy (CEO), DCIFCO Mr J Green (JG), EIFCO Ms N Wallace (NW) and NIFCA Administrative Officer Ms E Cosimini (EC).

3.1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman welcomed all attendees to the meeting and explained that this is the first meeting of the committee following the death of the former NSFC Clerk Sir Derek Bradbeer, who will be fondly remembered by all at NIFCA who knew him. He commented that he was pleased that Sir Derek was able to attend the launch of the new Authority vessel last year. He reminded all that there is a commemorative book of the day and if anyone wants one to contact EC. The Chairman also said that he was very pleased to welcome JS back to the NIFCA meetings.

Apologies: Chief IFCO Mr A B Browne (AB), Mrs J Fearon (JF), Dr M Kitching (MK), Mr J Lang (JL), Mr P Rippon (PR), Dr C Scott (CS).

There were no declarations of interest given.

3.2 NORTH OF THE TYNE FLAG PRESENTATION

The Chairman welcomed Mr Ivan Annibal (IA) from Rose Regeneration together with Heather Smith and Sarah Kidd from Northumberland County Council. Rose Regeneration are the consultation firm commissioned by Northumberland County Council to help with the bid for the North of the Tyne FLAG, due to their success with the Cornwall FLAG bid. IA confirmed that Northumberland County Council is the accountable body for this bid for £800,000 for the FLAG, who will be supported by Northumberland IFCA and North Tyneside Council. He continued that the FLAG would decide how this funding would be spent and would cover North Shields to Berwick. IA said that they would expect this to be a 2-3 year programme rather than 5 years. The Chairman commented that he welcomes the support of the local communities. The Vice Chairman said that 2-3 years seems to be a realistic timescale and asked if they envisage the FLAG to continue beyond the EMFF funding. IA explained that if the group has the right dynamic then they would envisage it continuing beyond the EMFF. SR asked when the bidding team will find out if they have been successful to which IA explained that the outcome will be released in October and the team plan, if successful, for the first meeting to be held in January 2017. DW asked what percentage of match funding is required for a project to which IA confirmed that it depends on the project, for example some require 50% match funding and others only 25%. BB asked if all projects will require match funding to which IA explained that all

projects will need match funding as it is highly unlikely that a project would get 100% funding from the FLAG. MB asked if the FLAG would facilitate these projects and IA explained that there would be a dedicated person within the FLAG to help facilitate these projects. SL explained that the Wildlife Trust had sent in letters of support with some ideas for projects but has not had a response from the FLAG team yet and asked when the bidding team are likely to be responding to these letters. IA confirmed that he would like to speak with SL about this. IA explained that NW has been extremely helpful throughout this process and has gone above and beyond to support this bid.

3.3 MINUTES OF THE QUARTERLY MEETING HELD ON 25 APRIL 2016 AND MATTERS ARISING THEREFROM

These minutes were received by the meeting and were accepted as an accurate record. The CEO confirmed that there will be a NIFCA stall at the Tallships event and Officers will also be attending with St Aidan. He confirmed that any members wishing to attend would also be very welcome at the event. The CEO then gave apologies that it is not possible to have NIFCA representatives at the Seahouses or Amble events that weekend.

3.4 MEETING ATTENDED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE AUTHORITY

This report was received and accepted by the meeting.

3.5 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT ON FIRST QUARTER OF NIFCA 2016-17 (members only)

This report was received and accepted by the meeting. The CEO explained that in regards to EMFF, the Authority hopes to put a bid in for acoustic seabed mapping equipment. With regards to staffing, the CEO confirmed that there have been some difficulties for the Authority in recent months due to staff absences through illness and explained that NIFCA has been on occasion down to 50% admin staff since January. He gave thanks to EC, DC and CB for their hard work.

The CEO explained that a funding bid for a lobster hatchery in Amble has been submitted by the Amble Development Trust (ADT) and there is hope that this will be accepted. DW asked what assistance NIFCA had given to the lobster hatchery bid to which the CEO explained that SSM had been to many of the development meetings to offer the expertise of the Authority and which had been done in a number of ways to enable Julia Aston of ADT to submit the bid.

The Vice Chairman added that the stakeholder event at the Seafood Centre in Amble had gone very well. He commented that the Officers did a great job of engaging with the public who showed a lot of interest in the work of NIFCA. He felt it to be a very positive PR day for the Authority. DW said that it would be great to have Officers attend the Holy Island tourist day.

3.6 BYELAWS – REVIEW OF BYELAWS 7 AND 8

This report was received by the meeting. The Chairman asked whether the coordinates held by the Authority are now the correct ones to which the CEO confirmed that they are. He explained that it has not been as simple as initially believed to make the amendments to the byelaws. Most recently, the Authority was contacted by DEFRA the previous week who said that the Minister would sign the byelaw off as long as the measurements were accurate and the overall

protected area is less than under the present byelaw and asked for NIFCA to check this. MS and NW had tried to do this on Friday last (the working day before this meeting) but were unable to complete the task, but it should be done shortly after the meeting. The Vice Chairman asked if the Officers could use Arc GIS to measure the area to which NW explained that the Authority doesn't have the latest edition of the programme, but with partner agency assistance the measurement would be completed.

3.7 REPORT ON PROGRESS OF PROJECTS DURING 2016-17

a) Newcastle University Projects in NIFCA district

NP explained that there are currently 4 masters students on short-term projects and confirmed that there will be a series of presentations of their work between the 6th and 7th September at Newcastle University. NP confirmed that Fabrice will soon be finishing his studies at Newcastle University and has had some of his papers published. He also explained 3 other projects taking place at Newcastle University: a study to try to find a way of aging lobster and crab but unfortunately they have so far not been able to do so; a study regarding gathering of molluscs around Holy Island; a study about how the community of trawlers has changed over time in Northumberland (dating back to 1880). The Vice Chairman asked if it would be possible to see the presentation regarding molluscs in Holy Island as it could relate to the NIFCA bait digging policy. NP said he would be happy to ask the student about doing a presentation to the Authority.

b) Lobster Survey and Escape gaps

The CEO explained that the team has had some useful discussions about the Escape Gap project and are looking forward to starting it soon. The aim of the study is to identify the possible positives and negatives to the use of escape gaps. JG confirmed that they will be contacting fishermen in the next few weeks about this. MB said that some fishermen are already using escape gaps and just need to agree the dates/ times to block off the escape gaps to take part in the study.

Publication of the Lobster survey has been delayed due to the absence through illness of Sally Stewart-Moore.

c) Shellfish Management Plan

NW explained that she has started working on this and now just needs to do some analysis regarding what information is out there. VR will also be working with NE IFCA to get data on the full region. MB asked if NEIFCA are doing a similar study to which NW confirmed that they have been doing so for a year and NIFCA plan to work closely with them.

3.8 Recreational Activity

The CEO confirmed that NIFCA has had some very good engagement with RSAs so far and would aim to do more in the winter, including visits to sea angling clubs. The Vice Chairman said that the stock of bass is about to collapse and that he had heard on the radio show which he does that there is a large number of bass being taken from Cambois. He suggested that all NIFCA signs need to be up to date to which IT said that all the signs should say 42cm minimum size for bass.

3.9 MPAs UPDATE

a) General Overview

The paper was received by the meeting and the Chairman gave thanks to JG for his work on this. SR confirmed that "Farron" grounds should read Farne Grounds. MB commented that this summer has seen big results for the nephrops fishery and there have been large landings of prawns. The Vice Chairman asked who the Authority is waiting on for national clarification regarding bait digging to which the CEO confirmed that Natural England are leading on this and hope to develop a scoping project in the Autumn.

b) Mobile Fishing within B&NNCSAC

The CEO explained that the next part of this process is to look at which areas can possibly be opened to fishing again. He confirmed that there has been a lot of analysis around this and the Authority is now close to a position to start drafting byelaws about these areas. MB asked if it would be possible to give a larger area but restrict the equipment/ trawls that can be used inside and the CEO confirmed that NIFCA will begin drafting a byelaw for the next Technical and Scientific meeting and see how this may work in practise. DW asked what CH thought of MBs suggestion, to which CH said that the Authority was forced to close the area due to it being a red risk but part of it can be reopened and managed through gear type, she would likely support it. The Vice Chairman explained that a lot of work has now gone into the mobile fishing byelaw but it was also intended for the same work to be done to the Seagrass byelaw but there has been no movement on this so far. The CEO confirmed that NIFCA will also do work on the Seagrass byelaw.

3.10 NORTH EAST MARINE PLAN

The CEO explained that the presentation in the meeting papers was from the first North East Marine Plan meeting and there has been progress with the project since then. The Vice Chairman explained that the plan is very extensive and is run similarly to Net Gain, so it will be a big piece of work. He explained that the North East Marine Plan is now open to NIFCA (and others) to feed into.

3.11 RISK ASSESSMENT

The CEO confirmed that there have been two risks added to the risk assessment matrix for Intel and the website/ database. The working group for the risk assessment matrix comprises of MH, AB, MS, JS and EC. He confirmed that the matrix can be found on the website if anyone wishes to see it.

3.12 CORRESPONDENCE

The report was received by the meeting. The Vice Chairman asked, with regards to point 13 of this report, where the spoil ground will be in Warkworth to which JG confirmed that it will be further up the beach but still on the channel. BP asked if any of the IFCOs have any responsibility with regards to dealing with modern slavery to which the CEO confirmed that there is no statutory duty but all staff have been informed that there is a moral duty to report any concerns to the police or Northumberland County Council. SL said that a lot of old pot tags have been found washed up on beaches after having been discarded at sea. He asked if the Authority could write to local permit holders to confirm that old tags need to be discarded responsibly to which the CEO confirmed that this is a good idea. MB suggested that the Authority also copy these letters into Harbour Masters.

3.13 SUMMARY OF WATCH AND FINANCE COMMITTEES BY THE CEO

Watch:

The CEO explained that all four sets of minutes were approved and the Sea Activity report was received by the meeting. He also confirmed that it has been decided to proceed in taking a lease of a Ford Ranger with the Council, which will include a fuel card giving a reduced rate and maintenance. The meeting approved training for IFCOs to use the new vehicle, the purchase of a new trailer and the introduction of lone worker trackers for IFCOs. The CEO confirmed that the Health and Safety report was received by the meeting and the Infringements report includes an ongoing case with a Scalloper and it was agreed by the Watch meeting to go to Court, subject to legal advice. He explained that the members handbook had been received by the meeting, which will be reviewed alongside other constitutional documents. It was confirmed by the CEO that following Brexit, the Authority operates as “business as usual” until told otherwise. Finally the CEO explained that IFCO Powers are currently being looked into and confirmed that the date of the next quarterly meeting is 31st October at the Quadrant, North Tyneside.

Finance:

The CEO confirmed that the last meeting’s minutes were approved by the meeting. The financial records were also approved and it was agreed that the Finance Committee would further consider the possibility of a 1% salary increase in October. The CEO also confirmed that the precepts have been approved and signed by himself, the Chairman and the Vice Chairman. He explained that SSM and DC are both currently on long term sick but both hope to return later in the year. Finally, the CEO confirmed that the recommendation to implement the new staff Grading Structure, following its recent review, has been approved and explained to IFCOs/ Staff. The CEO gave thanks to CH for her help in preparing and towards implementing this new structure and process.

3.14 IFCO REPORTS

3.14.1 Chief IFCO Report

This report was received and accepted by the meeting

3.14.2 Environmental IFCOs Report

This report was received and accepted by the meeting

3.14.3 Maintenance Report/ Engineering Log

This report was received and accepted by the meeting

3.15 GLOSSARY OF IFCA TERMS

This report was received by the meeting and the Chariman gave thanks for NW for her work on this.

3.15 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The CEO reminded the meeting that if anyone would like a copy of the Naming Ceremony book, they should let EC know.

There being no further business the meeting was closed by the Chairman at 16:10.