



## **Planning & Communication Sub-Committee Meeting**

**To be held at:**

**EIFCA Offices  
6 North Lynn Business Village  
Bergen Way, King's Lynn  
PE30 2JG**

**Wednesday  
15<sup>th</sup> March 2017  
1030 hours**

### **Vision**

The Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority will lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment and inshore fisheries, by successfully securing the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry



Meeting: **Planning and Communication Sub-Committee**

Date: 15 March 2017

Time: 10.30 hours

Venue: EIFCA Office  
6 North Lynn Business Village  
Bergen Way  
King's Lynn  
Norfolk  
PE30 2JG

### **Agenda**

- 1 Welcome by the Chair - *Chair*
- 2 Apologies for absence - *Chair*
- 3 Declaration of members' interests - *Chair*

### **Action Items**

- 4 Minutes of the Planning and Communication Sub-Committee meeting on 24 February 2016 - *Chair*
- 5 Matters Arising - *Clerk*
- 6 Strategic Assessment 2017 – *T/Senior IFCO*
- 7 Business Plan 2016-21 – *CEO*
- 8 Any other business  
To consider any other items which the Chair is of the opinion are matters of urgency by reason of special circumstances which must be specified

J. Gregory  
Chief Executive Officer

23 February 2017

## Planning & Communication Sub-Committee

*"EIFCA will lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment and inshore fisheries, by successfully securing the right balance between social, environmental and economical benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry".*



A meeting of the Planning & Communication Sub-Committee took place at 10.30 hours on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2016 at the Eastern IFCA office, King's Lynn

### Members Present:

Mr Shane Bagley	MMO Appointee
Cllr Hilary Cox	Norfolk County Council
Mr Paul Garnett	MMO Appointee
Cllr Tony Goldson	Suffolk County Council
Mr Tom Pinborough	MMO Appointee
Mr Keith Shaul	MMO Appointee
Mr Rob Spray	MMO Appointee
Mr John Stipetic	MMO Representative
Mr Stephen Worrall	MMO Appointee

### Eastern IFCA Officers Present:

Andrew Bakewell	Head of Finance
Luke Godwin	Temp Staff Officer to A/CEO
Julian Gregory	Acting CEO
Simon Lee	Senior IFCA - Compliance

### Observers

Cllr Tony Turner	Lincolnshire County Council
Emma Thorpe	Natural England

### **P&C16/01 Welcome by the Clerk**

The Clerk welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **P&C16/02 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Dr Bolt and Messrs Donnelly and Hirst (MMO Appointees)

### **P&C16/03 Declaration of members' interests**

There were no declarations of interest; however Mr Pinborough advised that he had been part of a meeting with another IFCA discussing matters relating to inshore netting. The Acting CEO advised this was more a view rather than an 'interest' which required declaring.

### **P&C16/04 Election of Chair**

Nominations for the role of Chair of the sub-committee were requested.

**It was Resolved to elect Mr Worrall to the position of Chair of the Planning & Communication sub-committee.**

**Proposed: Mr Pinborough**  
**Seconded: Mr Spray**  
**All Agreed**

**P&C16/05 Minutes of the Planning & Communication Sub-Committee meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2015**

**It was Resolved that the minutes were a true record of the proceedings.**

**Proposed: Paul Garnett**

**Seconded: John Stipetic**

**P&C16/06 Matters arising**

There were no matters arising

**P&C16/07 Business Planning Cycle**

The Acting CEO summarised the proposed direction of travel, which involved the move from an Annual Plan to a rolling five year Business Plan which would be updated annually.

Members were advised the original High Level Objectives (HLO) had expired the previous year and Defra had led on compiling new HLOs and Success Criteria. Whilst these had not been issued by the Minister as formal guidance they had been adopted by 9 of the 10 IFCA's.

Members were reminded that in 2015 the Strategic Assessment had been introduced which took a broad look at all the issues within EIFCA's remit and provided a tool to prioritise activities.

Since the inception of EIFCA there had been a significant increase in demand on both Environment and Marine Protection issues. Having to work to annual timeframes was not always helpful, therefore the proposed revised model of planning would allow for the changing environment. It would be a 5 year rolling Business Plan which would show the ability to deliver and a clear rationale for decisions.

Although there was a requirement under the HLO's to publish a plan each year setting out the main objectives and priorities for the next financial year the proposed 5 year plan still met this requirement. As such the ACEO was confident that Defra would not object to the revised method of planning, particularly as Defra had not issued formal guidance for IFCA's in this regard.

Cllr Cox felt the Business Plan was also a good idea in line with the potential Devolution Plan, with the possibility for Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridge to be working together it was sensible to have a five year plan, particularly as Cambridge did not have a need for an IFCA.

Members were generally in agreement with moving to a Business Plan and felt it would provide transparency as well as the ability to look ahead and provide longer lead time for some issues, and the annual review would ensure it was always relevant.

Mr Garnett did request clarity on the comment within the plan that stated there was a requirement to fish to the Maximum Sustainable Yield, he questioned whether this should read 'up to' rather than the inference that fisheries will be forced to fish 'to' it. The ACEO accepted this should read as 'up to' to the MSY

**Members Resolved to:**

**Note the content of the paper and to adopt the new model for business planning.**

**Proposed: Cllr Cox**

**Seconded: Mr Spray**

**All Agreed**

**PC16/08      Communications Report 2015-16**

Members were advised that during the year the Authority had successfully deployed both the show trailer and the mobile office, with the main focus of attention being on educational venues. Whilst these visits could be deemed a success in terms of being seen and heard they had placed a significant strain on the rostering process.

Members were reminded that during EIFCAs inception a benchmarking scheme had been undertaken to assess the level of public awareness of EIFCA. The intention had been that this survey would be repeated again in 2016, however having carried out the Community Engagement function over three years the ACEO did not believe it was a good use of public money as EIFCA were now a fairly well established organisation and most stakeholders knew who they were. The ACEO also advised he intended to subsume the Communications Report in to the Business Plan in future years, but to alleviate the strain on other workstreams the number of outreach events attended would be reduced and more consideration would be given to the type of event attended to ensure presence provided awareness rather than a family attraction. Emma Thorpe questioned whether not continuing to attend schools would mean there was no continuing awareness, the ACEO accepted there may be a need to revisit educational establishments but perhaps ensure they were higher education establishments rather than junior schools. Mr Worrall suggested providing educational packs to schools, the ACEO advised this was not something already done but it could be done on request. Cllr Turner advised that schools have a budget for visiting educational opportunities if leaflets were distributed to schools and they requested EIFCA attend a fee could be charged for the service. Mr Stipetic felt an information DVD would also promote EIFCA, which the ACEO advised was already available.

Cllr Cox advised members there were to be three Health Outreach Events being held on King's Lynn, Wells and Cromer for fishermen to attend and suggested EIFCA leaflets be available at these events.

**Members Agreed to:**

**Note the outreach activity undertaken during the last three years and the change in approach to planning communication and engagement activity**

**Members Resolved to Agree that the bench marking survey would not be repeated**

**Proposed:    Mr Spray  
Seconded:   Mr Stipetic  
All Agreed**

**Members Resolved to Approve the Corporate Communications report 2016-16**

**Proposed:    Mr Garnett  
Seconded:   Mr Spray**

**Members also Agreed to direct the officers to publish the report online.**

**PC16/09 Strategic Assessment 2016-17**

Members were advised the Strategic Assessment was a data driven assessment of risk for the whole district. Taken in conjunction with contextual risk assessment it gave an indication of where the priority work streams were in relation to risk. Key gaps had been identified which covered sustainability issues. Last year there had been risks associated to whelk and bass both of which had been reduced by changes in regulation. The assessment had identified that for the forthcoming year the two highest areas of risk would be shrimp and crab & lobster, both of which were also linked to potential habitat damage as well as sustainability. In addition to these high risk factors skate & rays, demersal fish and flat fish had been identified as medium risk affected by unregulated netting and poor data availability. Mussel die off was also considered to be a serious concern.

The ACEO advised he had also received correspondence requesting emergency measures be put in place to regulate bass fishing. Members were aware this had been discussed previously at the Statutory meeting when it was acknowledged that national legislation had been established to protect bass stocks but the ACEO advised members that the Authority had made a commitment to investigate unregulated netting, which was set out in the Business Plan.

Mr Pinborough expressed concern for the bass fish stocks and had met with Kent & Essex fishermen and charter boat skippers all of whom had felt the same. Whilst Mr Pinborough accepted it was no longer possible to go down the route of an Emergency Byelaw he was concerned by the use of the term unregulated netting and asked what the definition of this was as he felt all netting should be taken into account. He also wanted all landings to be taken into account rather than the 30kg landing allowance which it was not mandatory to record. Of particular concern to Mr Pinborough was the loophole which could change a drift net into a fixed net which would mean exploitation of the bass stocks. He also enquired why a permitting scheme had only been introduced for whelks and why it was not applied to other species.

The ACEO advised initial focus would be on unregulated netting as commercial fishing already had legislation attached to it and as such there was not a case to apply further restrictions at this stage. However it was his intention to support work on protecting nursery areas which would in turn support the stock levels.

Mr Spray also expressed concern that all netting exploitation should be taken into consideration, which was also echoed by Mr Stipetic who felt that with landing obligation on the horizon it would be worth looking at all netting not just unregulated netting. However the ACEO felt that targeting unregulated netting, which he defined as all netting activity other than that from a licensed vessel which is already controlled and managed, would be a staged and rational approach.

Members continued to discuss the management of the Bass fishery, and the concerns expressed by Mr Pinborough particularly with regard to unrecorded landings. Mr Shaul felt the majority of unregulated fishing took place at times when Fishery Officers were not present and suggested it may be prudent to increase the minimum net size. Mr Pinborough still felt this was discriminatory towards the recreational sector, Mr Spray was keen to ensure it was a complete and inclusive process and suggested the word unregulated be changed to unrecorded. However the ACEO advised that any change in wording would mean going back to the drawing board

with the Strategic Assessment as it would change the priorities and a re-evaluation would be needed.

The Chair noted Mr Pinborough's concerns but felt the present process had identified unregulated fishing as the priority risk.

Mr Bagley questioned what plans were proposed to reduce the risk to the Brown Shrimp fishery. The Staff Officer advised it was explained in the Business Plan that the management of fishery dynamics would look into the connection with the Marine Stewardship Council. The ACEO advised that management of the Marine Site and exploration of closed areas would be priorities however Officers were keen to work on gear trials to establish whether there was a damaging impact from gear/feature interaction.

Mr Garnett raised a query re wording on page 6 which implied small scale vessels were inefficient. It was agreed the wording was misleading in relation to what the author had meant to imply.

Mr Garnett also expressed concern about the potential to regulate potting in areas of Sabellaria reef and boulder & cobble, he described it as an example of scope creep, where the regulation creeps in and if care is not taken the fishing industry will become non-existent. The ACEO acknowledged this concern but advised it was EIFCA's duty to take into account Natural England's advice. Miss Thorpe advised this was less about a creep approach but more about addressing issues in order of priority. Potting had been considered less risk overall so its impacts had been considered towards the end of the process.

Miss Thorpe queried whether Reviewing Regulatory Notices should have been mentioned explicitly in the Strategic Assessment. The Staff Officer advised this was covered in more detail in the Business Plan.

**Members Resolved to note the content of the Strategic Assessment for 2016-17 and Approve the priorities identified by the Strategic Assessment**

**Proposed: Mr Bagley**

**Seconded: Mr Garnett**

**The motion was Agreed, however Mr Pinborough wanted it recorded that he was extremely unhappy about the wording of 'unregulated' netting.**

**PC16/10 Business Plan 2016-21**

The Business Plan had been devised to provide a strategic framework to work within, and a clear link to Defra's strategy.

Members worked through the Business Plan noting how it aligned with Defra's plan and how it clearly set out EIFCAs remit.

Mr Shaul questioned whether the Authority staff had the capability to remove pots from the sea. The ACEO advised that Authority vessels were fitted with pot haulers and felt that as *RV Three Counties* was a larger vessel than most fishing vessels it should have no difficulty. Mr Shaul expressed concern about the size of the district and the number of pots sitting dormant waiting to be fished, he felt EIFCA Officers may struggle to implement removal of pots.

The ACEO advised that the Authority's approach to enforcement was clearly set out with compliance being encouraged, and where there were

pots which should not be there if the industry informs the Authority they would be removed.

Having worked through the Appendices to the Business Plan there was some discussion on the taking of female crabs during the spawning period outside the 6nm limit, however whilst it would be ideal to have measures which spanned the boundaries it was felt unlikely that there would be a ban on catching female crabs outside 6nm for the months of November and December.

The ACEO advised that the Business Plan contained an ambitious and stretching set of priorities for 2016-17 but he believed they could be accommodated in a 5 year period as there was scope to roll priorities over from one year to the next where there was a case to do so. Mr Bagley questioned whether there would be more Officers issued with warrants to progress an offence if one was witnessed. The ACEO advised that a decision had been taken to separate functions as it was not viable to have Environment or Research Officers with dual roles because of the high level of training required, however it was possible to deputise these officers in the event of them assisting Enforcement Officers. In the event of an unwarranted officer witnessing an offence they could witness and record the offence for enforcement later.

The Chair felt the Business Plan was a good step forward but felt as a five year plan the only element which looked forward over 5 years was the financial section, with nothing else appearing to look beyond the next financial year. He felt the opportunity to set out some issues had been missed, as had the opportunity to identify goals which could not be delivered in the next year. To be a fully-fledged five year plan some additional forward thinking needed to be included. The ACEO acknowledged this and advised that time constraints meant that the first plan was a step in the right direction and that it would be developed further in future versions.

**Members Resolved to :**

- **note the content of the Business Plan, including the priorities and plans for 2016-17**
- **Approve the Business Plan 2016-21, including the priorities and plans for 216-17**

**Proposed: Cllr Cox**

**Seconded: Mr Stipetic**

**All Agreed, with the caveat added that Mr Pinborough still had reservations about the proposed management of bass fisheries.**

There being no other business the meeting closed at 1246 hours

## Vision

The Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority will lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment and inshore fisheries, by successfully securing the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry



## Action Item 6

### Planning and Communications Sub-committee meeting

15 March 2017

### Strategic Assessment 2017-18

**Report by:** L. Godwin, T/Senior IFCO

### Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to present the Strategic Assessment for 2017-18 for sub-committee approval and subsequent publication on behalf of the full Authority.

### Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- **Note** the content of the Strategic Assessment, including the priorities identified for 2017-18
- **Approve** the Strategic Assessment 2017-18, including the priorities identified for 2017-18

### Background

An annual assessment of Eastern IFCA fisheries is undertaken each year. The Strategic Assessment is used to identify the highest risk elements of all the fisheries in the district, including fisheries sustainability and viability and environmental impacts.

This assessment was introduced in 2014 and each iteration of the assessment has been subject to update and development to ensure outputs are relevant and take into account all the available evidence.

The Strategic Assessment draws on a data driven analysis (the initial assessment) and contextual knowledge of officers (the contextual assessment) to objectively identify potential work-streams and assign a priority based on the risk. This is used to inform the annual priorities set out in the rolling five-year Business Plan.

### Report

#### Development of the Strategic Assessment

Three additional criteria were added to the data driven, initial assessment:

- *Presence or absence of spawning and nursery grounds* – This had previously been included as part of the contextual assessment. Scores were assigned to each fishery to reflect a higher risk where spawning and nursery grounds are present.
- *EIFCA landings in a UK context* – Landed weights from within the Eastern IFCA district were reflected as a proportion of UK total landings for each species. Scores were assigned which reflect a higher risk where fisheries had greater national importance.
- *Fisheries trends* – Landed weights were analysed to detect positive or negative trends in landed weights over time. Scores were assigned which reflect a higher risk where a strong positive or negative trend was detected.

In addition to the new criteria used in the initial assessment, a new approach was developed which better incorporates wider fisheries management needs. Previous iterations of the assessment were more species / fisheries oriented and whilst environmental and ecosystem impacts were taken into account, the ‘risk scores’ associated with each fishery primarily related to fisheries performance.

In addition, analysis of the Community Voice Method project results indicated that, of key concern to stakeholders are two criteria in particular; the available evidence and the current regulatory structure.

As such, the scoring system has been simplified. A risk of high, medium or low is assigned to each of the following categories in relation to each fishery:

*Evidence base* – an assessment of the available evidence for each species in relation to fishing effort, landings, stock health and presence of spawning and nursery areas.

*Current Regulation* – assesses species based on measures currently in place in relation to protection of pre-spawning individuals, gear management or specification and effort restrictions.

*Ecosystem impacts* – assessment considers the potential ecosystem level impacts of the main gears associated with each species (e.g. by-catch, habitat damage) and the presence or absence of spawning and nursery areas of each species.

*Fisheries performance* – considers the landed weight and value of catch from within the Eastern IFCA district, any detectable trends in landed catch, landings from within the district as a proportion of the UK total and available ICES advice.

This ensures that there is parity across all the criteria used which reflects the main duties of the Authority.

The 2017-18 assessment also sets out the key ‘business as usual’ work-streams and secondary priorities.

‘Business as usual’ priorities relate to established work-streams responsible for maintaining a lower risk score for certain fisheries. These include, for example, the

annual cockle stock survey, without which, the risk associated with the cockle fishery would increase. These are set out to reflect the full suite of demands on the IFCA.

Secondary priority work streams relate to risks identified within the Assessment which are considered less of a priority. It is important to highlight these potential work streams as they may inform future Strategic Assessments or, opportunities may present during the year which enable additional benefit from existing or partner projects for which, these should be considered.

### Outputs of the Strategic Assessment 2017-18

Annual priorities reflect that work which is the focus during financial year rather than distinct, annual projects. Whilst the priorities identified during the 2016-17 Strategic Assessment have been progressed and are, for the most part, on track, the majority of these work-streams require continued development and completion.

This is reflected in the outputs of the 2017-18 assessment which has indicated that the key priorities are those carried over from 2016-17. Other 2016-17 priorities have been re-prioritised to account for wider developments which have reduced risk. In addition, some new priority work-streams have been identified.

Several 2016-17 priorities which have not been completed have been re-prioritised as a lower priority to reflect a lesser associated risk. These are as follows:

- *'Unregulated netting'* - The work-stream associated with 'unregulated netting' has been re-prioritised as medium to reflect the national work-stream related to Bass Nursery Areas. Eastern IFCA's contribution to this work-stream will potentially mitigate a large portion of the risk associated with this activity. 'Unregulated netting' is to be reassessed in this context.
- *Review of Regulatory Notices* - Spatial closures were introduced through the Protected Areas Byelaw in May 2014 in relation to 'red-risk' features within the district. Regulatory Notices were scheduled for review during Q4 of 2016-17. However, complexities involved in other priorities have reduced available resource to undertake this review. MPA features which require protection have been prioritised above this review which reflects that, whilst a review is required, the measures in their current form are having a protective effect. It may be possible to undertake the review as part of the ongoing 'red-risk' work-stream.
- *Developing mechanisms to improve fisheries data* – A national approach to improving fisheries data (particularly in relation to under-10 meter vessels) is underway which mitigates the risk associated with this 2016-17 priority. As such the work-stream has been reprioritised as a lesser priority.

In addition, several new work-streams were identified as of high priority. These are as follows:

- *Developing monitoring and control plans* - Monitoring and control plans aim to ensure that, where a Habitat Regulations Assessment has concluded no

adverse effect, conditions do not change which would lead to a degrading of site integrity. These will need to be created for each MPA within the district. They have in themselves been prioritised in relation to risk associated with damage to MPA features (Section 1.2.3 'Fisheries Management in MPAs' – Strategic Assessment 2017-18).

- *Introduction of measures to mitigate risk of damage to the Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC from 'unmanaged' fishing activity* – As a result of the Supreme Court decision in relation to the boundary of the Le Strange private fishery (Action Item 19, 23<sup>rd</sup> EIFCA Meeting, 27 April 2016), mitigation may be required pending the outcomes of discussions between fishers and the Le Strange Estate. The 'new' boundaries may have the effect of opening an 'unmanaged' area between the private fishery and the Wash Fisher Order.
- *Gap analysis and initial assessments of newly designated MPAs* – Several new MPAs are in the process of full designation and ultimately Habitat regulations will be required to determine if management measures are required. It is recognised that associated assessments are data intensive and a gap analysis will inform associated future work-streams.
- *Monitor fisheries management of bass in the context of European and national fisheries management measures and contribute to the development of Bass Nursery Areas* – Whilst bass stocks are considered to be in a very poor state, the risk associated with bass fisheries is mitigated by the implementation of European management measures and a national work-stream related to Bass Nursery Areas. EIFCA contribution to the related work-streams will further reduce the associated risk.
- *Investigate the cause of mussel mortality within The Wash* – Mussel 'die-off' in The Wash is thought to have contributed to the recent poor productivity of the fishery. The fishery has previously had a large economic value and been of a nationally important scale.

Further rationale as to the re-prioritisation of 2016-17 priorities and the emergence of 'new' priorities is presented within the Strategic Assessment 2017-18.

## **Risk**

The risk associated with the assessment is that it does not detect a priority work-stream. This is mitigated by the further development of the assessment as set out above. In addition, the Strategic Assessment is a live document, which is intended to be updated to reflect new evidence and changing contextual needs.

Appendix:

1. Strategic Assessment 2017-18

## Vision

The Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority will lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment and inshore fisheries, by successfully securing the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry



## Action Item 7

### Planning and Communications Sub-committee meeting

15 March 2017

#### 2017-22 Business Plan

Report by: J. Gregory, CEO

#### Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to submit the draft Business Plan for 2017-22 for sub-committee approval and subsequent publication on behalf of the full Authority.

#### Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- **Note** the content of the Business Plan, including the priorities and plans for 2017-18
- **Approve** the Business Plan 2017-22, including the priorities and plans for 2017-18

#### Background

A rolling five-year Business Plan was developed and introduced in April 2016, bringing together all elements of activity undertaken by the organisation.

The plan is intended to project five years in advance with annual reviews to update the strategic and financial context and to prioritise and plan for each financial year.

The revised model is intended to provide a longer term and more cohesive approach to business planning by drawing together all elements of activity in a single plan.

#### Business Plan 2017-22

The plan provides the strategic framework within which Eastern IFCA operates and describes our ability to deliver against our vision and priorities. This is demonstrated by setting out factors such as effective leadership arrangements; the strength of the team in terms of experience, qualifications and skills; being appropriately equipped; operating effectively and; effective financial management.

An important element of this approach is to demonstrate that the work of Eastern IFCA is an investment in the local marine environment and to develop a narrative that would lead contributing authorities to view funding in that context rather than simply being another demand on hard pressed finances.

The plan shows a clear linkage to Defra's vision and strategy because, although IFCA's are not Defra bodies, they do deliver into the Defra remit and understanding the link demonstrates the wider awareness of Eastern IFCA. The Business Plan also incorporates the new Success Criterion and High Level Objectives, which will guide the work of Eastern IFCA during the next four to five years.

### **Priorities 2017-18**

The overall priorities for 2017-18 have been identified as a consequence of the annual Strategic Assessment and are set out in Appendix 3 of the Business Plan.

The Enforcement plan is set out in Appendix 4.

The Communications and Engagement Plan is set out in Appendix 5.

### **Risk**

The risk matrix in the plan is set out in Appendix 1 reflects the most significant strategic risks to the Authority which demand management action. The key risk to Eastern IFCA is remains uncertainty of future funding despite the extension of New Burdens funding to 2020.

Appendix:

2. Draft Business Plan 2017-22