

3rd Eastern IFCA Meeting Minutes



"Eastern IFCA 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 Eastern Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority took place in The Boathouse Business Centre, Wisbech, on Wednesday 26th October 2011 at 1030 hrs.

Members Present:

Mr P Barham	MMO Appointee
Dr S Bolt	MMO Appointee
Cllr J Dobson	Norfolk County Council
Mr C Donnelly	Natural England Representative
Cllr T Goldson	Suffolk County Council
Mr R Handford	EA Representative
Mr N Lake	MMO Appointee
Mr C Morgan	MMO Appointee
Mr T Pinborough	MMO Appointee
Cllr K Sale	Suffolk County Council – Eastern IFCA Chair
Mr R Spray	MMO Appointee
Mr J Stipetic	MMO Representative
Cllr A Turner	Lincolnshire County Council
Cllr S Williams	Lincolnshire County Council
Mr S Worrall	MMO Appointee

Eastern IFCA Officers Present:

D Vaughan	Chief Executive Officer
E Hannam	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
C M Hurley	Finance Officer
J C Stoutt	Marine Environment Officer
J Woo	MEO - Spatial Data
E Maxwell	Research Officer

Present by Invitation:

C Johnson	Natural England
-----------	-----------------

Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Callaby (NCC) and Thompson (NCC) and Messrs Bagley, Smith and Vanstaen (MMO Appointees).

The Chairman opened the meeting by advising members that following a period away from the office the CEO was now back at the helm and EIFCA would soon be back on track.

EIFCA11/52 Declaration of Members Interests

Mr Lake declared an interest as he was both an Entitlement and Lay Holder.

EIFCA11/53 Minutes of the 2nd Eastern IFCA Meeting, held on 27th July 2011

Members agreed to receive the minutes as a true record of the proceedings.

EIFCA11/54 Matters Arising

Councillor Williams requested that page numbers were added to the meeting papers.

Mr Worrall questioned whether all the actions stated in the minutes had been carried out. He requested that a set of action minutes be circulated to all members shortly after the meeting.

EIFCA11/55 Presentation from Dr Bolt, the CEO of the Association of IFCA's

Dr Bolt advised that as part of his role as CEO of AIFCA his intention was to visit all the IFCA's to provide the same presentation which included advice on his previous employment history and how his intention was to engage with all IFCA's, Statutory Bodies and NGOs, as well as an update of his progress. Dr Bolt also outlined how he saw the way ahead and savings that could be made by centralising HR & legal for all IFCA's. At the end to the presentation Councillor Williams requested that a copy of the presentation be emailed to all members.

Members asked a variety of questions and felt it was a beneficial position to be in with the CEO of the AIFCA being a member of Eastern IFCA. It was noted that in order to remain fair and even handed Dr Bolt would no longer sit on any sub-committees.

Mr Barham felt it was right to have started considering the strategy and felt it was important to set out the role and responsibilities of IFCA's and how they would be achieved. Dr Bolt advised this was ongoing with NE penning the first draft for Defra to consider. He advised he did not believe the first draft would be available for consultation but he would ask that IFCA's be given the opportunity to comment on the paper.

Mr Pinborough queried whether it would be possible to have a clear definition of what was meant by 'sustainable'. Dr Bolt advised there was a standard definition which he would provide for members.

EIFCA11/56 Finance Officer's report on payments made and monies received during the period 8th July 2011 - 12th October 2011

It was Resolved to accept the report of payments made amounting to £478,327.74 and receipts amounting to £40,409.79 during the period 8th July 2011 - 12th October 2011.

Proposed: Councillor Williams

Seconded: Mr Barham

All Agreed

EIFCA11/57 Finance Officer's Quarterly Management Accounts

The report contained the payments made and monies received set out in context with the quarters' apportioned budget for the year. The Finance Officer advised that expenditure was on track for that projected for the year with the exception of the hire of Thamesis which had not been included in the budget.

It was questioned why new burden money had not been included in the general pot, at which the CEO advised for the first year it was prudent to clearly show where New Burden money was being spent, in the future it would be amalgamated with funding from the councils.

Councillor Turner questioned whether it was possible to use New Burden money to cover some of the general expenditure which may allow for some of the funding from the Councils to be saved and put into the vessel replacement fund. The CEO did not envisage there would be any surplus at the end of the financial year.

It was Resolved to accept the quarterly management accounts.
Proposed: Councillor Williams
Seconded: Mr Worrall
All Agreed

EIFCA11/58 External Audit of Accounts for ESFJC for the financial year 2010-2011

Members were advised the external audit report was approved by the F&P sub-committee in June at which time it was forward to Mazars. It had subsequently been returned with no disputes, the final cost had shown a saving of approximately £7,000 as a result of carrying out the audit in this manner.

Councillor Williams thanked the Finance Officer for another good year in control of the accounts.

Members agreed to receive the report.

EIFCA11/59 Report on the extraordinary meeting of the Finance and Personnel Sub-Committee held on 9th August and a meeting of the Finance & Personnel Sub-Committee held on 30th September 2011

This was a matter of report, those who had been present at the meetings agreed it was an accurate account of proceedings.

Members agreed to receive the report.

EIFCA11/60 Report on an extraordinary meeting of the Marine Protected Area Sub-Committee held on 23rd September 2011

The Deputy CEO advised that following a chain of events a meeting of the MPA sub-committee had been called in an attempt to resolve several issues. As a result of the meeting a workshop was to be held following the MPA sub-committee meeting on 30th November.

Mr Lake disputed the suggested course of events and advised that it was his belief the workshop was to discuss cockles, but prior to the workshop taking place IFCA members would get together to create concrete proposals for a wider audience to consider. The Deputy CEO agreed that a small focus group would be convened to agree points to be discussed at the workshop. This would be an amendment to the proposed resolution.

Mr Lake advised members that there had been sub-littoral seed mussel stock which had not been surveyed in time for the industry to benefit from them, however he congratulated the officers on the speed with which they had dealt with the area of seed mussel at Sea Palling, he did not believe the industry could have asked for a quicker response.

It was Resolved that a workshop be convened on 30th November 2011 consisting of members, officers and community participates, after a meeting of a focus group, as set out within the paper to confirm a Charter of fisheries operations.

Proposed: Mr Donnelly
Seconded: Councillor Dobson
All Agreed

EIFCA11/61 Report detailing the resignation and appointment of MMO members from/to the Finance and Personnel Sub-Committee

In order to avoid any conflict of interest Dr Bolt was no longer in a position to be a member of the Authority's sub-committees, it was therefore, necessary to find willing members to replace him.

It was Resolved that Mr Barham would become a member of the Finance & Personnel sub-committee

**Proposed: Councillor Goldson
Seconded: Councillor Williams
All Agreed**

It was Resolved that Mr Pinborough would become a member of the Planning & Communication sub-committee

**Proposed: Councillor Williams
Seconded: Councillor Goldson
All Agreed**

EIFCA11/62 Report establishing the approach that the Authority will take during a review of byelaws

The CEO advised that he felt the appropriate way forward would be to deal with the byelaws in three separate tranches. Firstly consideration could be given to those byelaws which were no longer applicable, the second step would be to identify those which could be remade with no substantive changes with the third step being a big consultation and impact assessment on how to remake/make new byelaws for the district. Within in this would be suggestions such as amalgamating byelaws which related to the same species. If members agreed to these steps then the CEO would convene a meeting of the appropriate sub-committee and get the process in motion.

Councillor Turner questioned the process for bringing in emergency byelaws but was advised that under the Authority's standing orders the CEO had to confer with, and get the approval of, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Authority prior to introducing an emergency byelaw

It was Resolved that the byelaw review be conducted in the manner identified.

**Proposed: Mr C Morgan
Seconded: Cllr J Dobson
All Agreed**

EIFCA11/63 Report recommending the establishment and composition of a working group to review the sea going assets required by the Authority

The CEO advised members there was a pressing need to replace ESF Protector III. In order to meet the budget requirement of a 25% saving over 4 years, the operation of this vessel did not feature in projected budgets from 2013 onwards. The CEO advised that if the Authority wanted to replace the vessel the process needed to be started as it could take a minimum of 18 months to complete. The CEO recommended that a working group be organised by the patrol boat skipper which would draw on the expertise of members.

Councillor Williams questioned what was happening with electronic surveillance on a national level, as he believed this would effect the type of replacement vessel needed. Dr Bolt then questioned what the future requirements would be, would the vessel be expected to go out to 12nm. Councillor Dobson felt these scenarios could be included in the list of points to be considered by the working group.

Mr Lake questioned whether it would be more cost effective to hire vessels from the industry. This could also be considered by the working group, however Mr Morgan felt that hiring of KEIFCA's vessel for 8 days at a cost of £12,000 was expensive.

It was Resolved that a Working Group would be convened as set out in the paper.

Proposed: Councillor Williams

Seconded: Councillor Turner

Members who expressed an interest in being part of the working group were:

Mr Lake

Councillor Sale

Mr Spray

Councillor Turner

Councillor Williams

Mr Worrall

Members who were not in attendance would be contacted to enquire whether they would like to be part of the Working Group.

EIFCA11/64

Report on the completed investigation into food availability within the Wash and the implications of findings within the report and next steps

Members were advised that in 2009 a study had begun to specifically look at food availability and the affect on biomass of stock in the Wash. The initial findings of the study were that food availability was not having a large scale affect of cockle and mussel stocks in the Wash.

In 2009 a moratorium had been placed on lays until the study had been completed. Ideally the next step would be to remove the moratorium and issue lays however, as the lay leases were only issued for a period of 10 years it was necessary to carry out a review of consents before the leases could be renewed. The CEO was reluctant to issue new lays before the review was completed, as the findings of the review may suggest lays could not be re-issued. Councillor Williams disagreed with this and felt that as the study had found no evidence that the cockle seemed to be starving as a direct result of lack of food then the he did not believe there was evidence to maintain the moratorium.

Mr Donnelly advised that a previous review of lays in 2008 did not take into account the findings of the study he believed any decision made should take into account research which had been done since 2008 and any elements which may be missing from the research.

The CEO felt this was a complex issue which required further investigation. The Deputy CEO agreed there were several issues to consider and a consultation should take into account all these issues in relation to each other, he also felt it would be prudent to work out the total available space that could be allocated for lays before issuing any more.

Mr Lake noted that no mention had been made of razors which must be taking some of the food supply, he believed the decline in mussel meat count related to the explosion in numbers of razors.

It was acknowledged that the findings of the Sweep study were not conclusion by the MEO advised she was cautiously confident that each

issue raised by NE could be addressed in relation to the Review of Consents.

It was Resolved to accept the officers proposed timetable to progress Wash Fishery Order lay applications following the review of consents and comprehensive review of WFO lease management.

Proposed: Councillor Williams
Seconded: Mr Barham
All Agreed

EIFCA11/65 Report on the principles to be used when establishing Wash Fishery Order 1992 tolls and licence fees

Members were advised that the 5 year agreement relating to licence tolls was due to expire in 2012, it would therefore be necessary to begin the process to apply to the Minister for a further variation in tolls for the next 5 years. The Deputy CEO advised that due to changes in legislation it was not possible the authority to split the money received from licence fees between cost of work carried out for the benefit of the fisheries and covering the costs incurred to administer the WFO. It was therefore questioned whether the Authority wanted to consider a calculation which took into account the costs incurred with the WFO, he did advise that even to recoup 1% of the cost would involve a consider increase from the tolls currently being applied. There was a feeling amongst members that to vastly increase the price of a licence would be unfair on the fishermen. It was noted that no decision on the price of a licence needed to be made immediately just agreement in principle of the steps to be taken.

The CEO suggested stakeholders should be consulted and other IFCA's should be asked how much they charge for licences. Mr Lake felt it should also be ascertained the length of opening time of other fisheries, as well as the number of vessels involved and the daily TAC.

It was Resolved that work should commence on establishing a new toll structure for the WFO 1992, following the steps as set out in the paper.

Proposed: Councillor Williams
Seconded: Councillor Goldson
All Agreed

EIFCA11/66 Report on the future approach of the Authority to its conservation obligations following a letter from the Marine Conservation Society to the Marine Management Organisation

The MEO gave an update on the situation regarding managing fisheries within the European Marine Sites, and reminded members that the Authority already had in place an agreed approach as to how to manage fisheries in Marine Protected Areas. The MEO suggested that the Authority continue with this approach as well as continuing to liaise closely with NE, MMO and stakeholders for all fisheries within the district. It was also suggested the Authority should engage more widely with environment stakeholders such as Marine Conservation Society and Client Earth, and when carrying out new pieces of work it should look at wider management responsibilities for the whole of the district, such as sustainability assessment for fisheries within the district.

Dr Bolt agreed in principle but requested that the MEO keep AIFCA informed so that they could speak knowledgeably at a national level. The CEO felt there was a perception that there was insufficient management in place which was not the case and he felt that EIFCA should be fairly represented.

It was Resolved to agree to the recommendations put forward with regard to the Authority's approach to conservation obligations and to keep AIFCA informed if any discussion took place with national NGOs.

Proposed: Councillor Williams

Seconded: Mr Barham

All Agreed

EIFCA11/67 Report on the termination of the Memorandum of Agreement between the Authority and the Wash Estuary Strategy Group

Members were advised that the Authority had agreed to act as employing authority for WESG for a period of one year. It was now time to decide whether to continue or give notice that the agreement would cease in February. The CEO advised that whilst the group would not be able to continue in the future he did not feel that the way the group planned to go in the future would fit in with EIFCA. He also felt the financial contribution was disproportionate to the amount of officer time being spent on behalf of the group. It was his recommendation that the Authority did not continue to act as employing authority to WESG.

It was Resolved to accept the report and approve the recommendation that the MOA between EIFCA and WESG be terminated on 28th February 2012.

Proposed: Councillor Williams

Seconded: Councillor Dobson

All Agreed.

EIFCA11/68 Report on the progress towards meeting the Authority's 2011 Annual Plan

Dr Bolt questioned whether an additional item referring to Communication strategy could be included however, Mr Barham felt it would prudent to wait for AIFCA and then work from that strategy.

Members agreed to accept the report.

EIFCA11/69 Report recommending the adoption of Navigating the Future approach by the Authority

Members were given a brief summary of what 'Navigating the Future' meant to EIFCA, during which it was explained that it could be done by working in conjunction with KEIFCA and identifying funding streams which could be used towards joint working.

Councillor Williams questioned why consideration was not given to working in partnership with the IFCA to the north of the district, the explanation being that that IFCA had already carried out a similar study a few years ago.

It was Resolved to accept the report and the recommendation that the application of the Navigating the Future Project to the Eastern-IFCA district be further explored in conjunction with KEIFCA.

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

EIFCA11/70 Report setting out future Authority meeting dates and suitable venues

The CEO advised that the suggestion had been made that the quarterly meetings should be held at different venues throughout the district, consequently suggested dates and venues were put forward for members comment.

There was concern that one of the meetings was on a Thursday which was not convenient for some members, however the venue had not been available on the Wednesday. With this in mind it was suggested that the movement of meetings around the district should be deferred for a year so that bookings could be secured. However there was a feeling that the meetings should be open to all interested parties throughout the district and this would make them more accessible.

It was Resolved to accept the report and agree the meeting dates and venues, although the Chairman did agree to try and change the date of the meeting in Ipswich.

**Proposed: Councillor Barham
Seconded: Mr Spray
There were no abstentions, one vote against and the remainder were in favour.**

EIFCA11/71 Area IFCOs quarterly reports

Mr Pinborough expressed disappointment that in the Area 3 report reference was made to a meeting of sea anglers held in Cromer and stated the meeting had been poorly advertised with no agenda when in fact Mr Pinborough had contacted the local associations and provided an agenda, he felt it would have been prudent for the IFCO to have contacted him direct. The CEO agreed to speak to the officer on the correct way to deal with similar situations in the future.

Members agreed to accept the report.

EIFCA11/72 Vessels quarterly reports

Members noted Pisces III was being stored at Wells and was being used by Norfolk Constabulary, it was questioned how the Committee were reimbursed for the use of this vessel. The CEO advised the Committee were refunded in kind as the Norfolk Constabulary had taken on responsibility of servicing the vessel and it was stored free of charge. He also assured members that EIFCAs use of the vessel was in no way compromised.

Following on from this paper there was discussion on the running costs for EIFCA vessels as Dr Bolt advised the MMO were looking into partnership working which would use vessels across IFCA's and would

refund full costs. It was noted that other IFCA's seemed to have lower running costs however, it was not certain whether this was full running costs taking into account insurance charges etc. Mr Stipetic advised that the vessel selection would not be based solely on cost but would take into account the appropriate type of vessel for the task and location.

Members agreed to accept the report

EIFCA11/73 Senior Research Officer quarterly report

Members agreed to accept the report

EIFCA11/74 Marine Environment Officer quarterly report

Members agreed to accept the report

EIFCA11/75 Update on the recommended Marine Conservation Zones within the Net Gain and Balanced Seas project areas

Councillor Goldson questioned what impact these zones would have on the fishing industry to which Mr Pinborough advised it would impact on angling however it was still in the consultation process which could take another 12 months and he felt no account would be taken on MCZs until the consultation process was complete.

Members agreed to accept the report.

EIFCA11/76 Establishment of Community feedback surgeries following Authority meetings

The CEO recognised that in the past the composition of the committee had been such that it represented a variety of communities however, IFCA members were selected for experience, he therefore suggested that following statutory meetings IFCA officers should hold meetings throughout the district for interested parties so that everyone could be kept informed on what is happening at EIFCA.

Members agreed to accept the report.

EIFCA11/77 Wash Estuary Strategy Group Project manager quarterly report

Members agreed to accept the report

EIFCA11/78 Angling 2012 update

Members agreed to accept the report

There being no other business the meeting closed at 1325 hours.