

4th EIFCA Meeting Minutes



"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 Eastern Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority took place in The Council Chambers, Suffolk County Council, Endeavour house, Ipswich, on Thursday 26th January 2012 at 1330 hrs.

Members Present:

Mr S Bagley	MMO Appointee
Mr C Donnelly	Natural England Representative
Cllr T Goldson	Suffolk County Council
Mr R Handford	EA Representative
Cllr B Hannah	Norfolk County Council
Mr N Lake	MMO Appointee
Mr C Morgan	MMO Appointee
Mr T Pinborough	MMO Appointee
Cllr K Sale	Suffolk County Council – EIFCA Chairman
Mr R Spray	MMO Appointee
Mr J Stipetic	MMO Representative
Cllr H Thompson	Norfolk County Council – EIFCA Vice Chairman
Mr S Worrall	MMO Appointee
Mr K Vanstaen	MMO Appointee

EIFCA Officers Present:

D Vaughan	Chief Executive Officer
E Hannam	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
C M Hurley	Finance Officer
A Woods	IFCO – Area 3

Present by Invitation:

Ms L Humphries	MMO
Mr B Smart	MMO
Mr J Sooben	MMO

Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Callaby (NCC), Turner (LCC) and Williams (LCC), Mr Barham and Dr Bolt (MMO appointees)

EIFCA12/01 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman advised that Cllr Hannah was now a member of the Authority, replacing Cllr Dobson on behalf of Norfolk County Council. As Mr Dobson had been a member of the F&P sub-committee members were advised that Cllr Hannah had acted as substitute for the sub-committee meeting held earlier in the day.

It was Resolved that Councillor Hannah be elected to the Finance & Personnel Sub-Committee.

Proposed: Councillor Goldson
Seconded: Mr Worrall
All Agreed

EIFCA12/02 Declaration of Members Interests

Messrs Bagley, Brewster and Lake declared an interest in item 14, as they were WFO 1992 Entitlement Holders.

EIFCA12/03 Presentation on marine planning by the Marine Management Organisation

Mr Sooben the Marine Planning Liaison team manager, with the MMO, gave a brief overview on the MMO approach to marine planning, how it relates to IFCAs and how they hope to help develop sustainable development taking into account the increasing demand on the marine environment. Emphasis was made on the holistic approach, involving everyone who enjoys or uses the marine environment.

EIFCA12/04 Presentation on the Inshore Vessel Monitoring System (IVMS) trial by Koen Vanstaen

Mr Vanstaen gave a presentation on the IVMS which had been developed by Succor Fish. The system had been developed following Lyme Bay being closed to scallop fishing. As the whole area was not covered by reef it meant potential scallop fishing opportunities were being missed, consequently the system was devised to allow use of gear to be monitored as well as the area in which a vessel was situated. Being based on mobile phone technology the cost of monitoring was also cheaper allowing vessels to be monitored every few minutes. The system was also considered suitable for smaller vessels as the unit could be powered by a single solar panel, negating the need to carry a large battery.

Mr Worrall felt the system had great potential however, he was concerned about who would receive the data and the ongoing cost. There was also concern about the timescale for the conclusion of the trial. Mr Vanstaen indicated the trial project would complete at the end of March with analysis taking until June/July it would therefore be the summer before more information was available.

Councillor Hannah questioned whether the data would be acceptable as evidence in prosecutions, Mr Vanstaen felt it should be noted that prosecutions always involved actual observation, but the IVMS would be a tool to prepare an enforcement vessel.

Mr Pinborough then questioned whether trials had been carried out on species which did not fall into potting and trawling, he could not envisage the system being useful in enforcing a handworked fishery. Mr Vanstaen advised that trials had taken place on dredgers, trawlers. Potters and netters, he believed trawling was the most contentious activity.

Members were advised that all over 12m vessels were required by the MMO to have such a system installed, although the type of system was still being decided on. Mr Lake queried why it was necessary for vessels working within EIFCA to carry two boxes. The CEO advised the intention was to wait for the outcome of the MMOs research however EIFCA's interest was in the gear deployment aspect which may not be a requirement covered by the MMO system. The CEO also advised that it

was his belief that all vessels, regardless of size should be fitted with a box whilst the MMO only required vessels over 12m to be fitted.

Mr Stipetic was concerned that this would not cover nomadic vessels who could be fishing illegally, the CEO advised the system was only being investigated at this stage if the decision was made to go ahead then scenarios such as this would have to be considered.

Mr Worrall felt it was vital to have a unit which met the needs of all the regulators and hoped the MMO system included the monitoring of gear which would negate the need to have two units installed. Mr Vanstaen agreed the IFCA should work in partnership with the MMO and hoped the unit would make this possible. Mr Stipetic agreed to investigate whether the MMO were considering a system which would be versatile enough to meet the CEOs requirements.

EIFCA12/05 Minutes of the 3rd EIFCA Meeting held on 26th October 2011

Members worked through the Minutes and noted that all actions which required addressing had been carried out.

Members agreed to approve the Minutes

Proposed: Councillor Goldson

Seconded: Mr Worrall

EIFCA12/06 Matters Arising

EIFCA11/69 – Navigating the Future: The CEO advised that following the previous meeting it had been agreed all IFCAs would be working on this project collectively. When more information was available it would be provided at a future meeting.

EIFCA12/07 Report on a meeting of the Marine Protected Area Sub-Committee and workshop held on 30th November 2011

Members were advised the meeting had considered four major items:

- 1 Opening of a Mussel Fishery: it had been agreed to open a handwork fishery with immediate effect and reassessment would take place in the spring with a view to opening a dredge fishery.
- 2 *Sabellaria*: discussion took place on what measures were needed to protect the Ross Worm species, the outcome of which was that more information was required on potting.
- 3 WFO Licence Tolls: the members had agreed to the discussion document being circulated
- 4 WFO Management: members considered a detailed project plan for future management.

The Workshop had focused on the requirements and expectations for the opening of a cockle fishery.

All Agreed to accept the report.

EIFCA12/08 Report on a meeting of the Finance and Personnel Sub-Committee held on 26th January 2012

Members were advised that at the meeting held earlier in the day the proposed budget for 2012/2013 had been approved and the forecast figures for 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 had been noted.

A Hospitality budget had been set, however an agreed procedure for expenditure was still being discussed.

Reports on staff probationary periods had been discussed and approved.

Members also discussed the anticipated significant underspend and made a decision to recommend the creation of an Operational Reserve for the money to be put in to. The CEO advised the main thought was to investigate spending the money on IVMS, however if it was not used for this purpose it would go to other New Burden duties.

Members Agreed to accept the report.

EIFCA12/09 Finance Officer's report on payments made and monies received during the period 13th October 2011 to 12th January 2012

It was Resolved to accept the report of payments made amounting to £326,595.88 and receipts amounting to £66,467.96 during the period 13th October 2011 to 12th January 2012.

Proposed: Cllr Goldson

Seconded: Mr Morgan

All Agreed

EIFCA12/10 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 comparison figures had been provided showing the proportion of the budget at 9 months and the actual expenditure at 9 months.

It was Agreed to note the Quarterly Management Accounts

EIFCA12/11 Provisional budget for 2012/2013 and provisional forecast for 2013/2015

Members were advised that the provisional budget had previously been considered by the F&P sub-committee and it was their view they should be accepted.

Mr Morgan noted the £27,000 for IT support and that it was predicted to increase to £35,000 he felt this was a lot of IT support. The CEO advised Defra had provided funding under the transitional process to provide new IT equipment as the existing IT arrangements was considered a 'business risk' the £27k was for NCC to provide support going forward, the increase in future years was to reflect the increased requirement for shorebased officer to go onto the system.

Mr Morgan also queried the operating costs for FPV Sea Spray he noted they were to cover operation costs and hiring of vessels, Mr Morgan felt it would make more sense to increase the operating cost and keep the vessel use inhouse. The CEO advised that whilst decisions were being made regarding what the future fleet at EIFCA should consist of there was a likelihood that for a period of time there may be a need to hire a patrol asset, hence the need to have sufficient funds to hire or contract a vessel. He also advised that in order to ensure Suffolk was suitably covered the vessel Thamesis owned by KEIFCA had been hired for use in the Suffolk Rivers.

Mr Pinborough questioned whether the IT teething problems had been resolved, he was advised by the CEO that as a result of the delay in the

system being installed the maintenance contract for 2011/2012 had been scrapped, he added that the new IT route had had to be gone down as EIFCA had to get secure gcsx connections.

Members Resolved to approve the budget for 2012/2013 and to note the forecast for 2013/2015.

Proposed: Councillor Goldson
Seconded: Councillor Hannah

EIFCA12/12 Providing the Planning & Communication Sub-Committee with the delegated authority to approve and submit the Authority's Annual, Environment and Research plans 2012/2013 to Defra

Members were reminded that one of the High Level Objectives was to produce Annual, Environment and Research Plans. The CEO requested that the Authority provide delegated powers to the P&C sub-committee to view and submit the plans to Defra.

Mr Vanstaen was concerned that other members should be given the opportunity to view these plans prior to submission in order to provide comment. The CEO advised the sub-committee would meet on 15th February therefore all comments would be required prior to this date for consideration, he would circulate the Annual Plan to all members.

It was Resolved to give delegated powers to the Planning & Communication sub-committee to approve the Annual, Research and Environment Plans to Defra.

Proposed: Councillor Goldson
Seconded: Mr Worrall

EIFCA12/13 Report following a consultation on establishing Wash Fishery Order 1992 tolls

Following the closing date for responses to the consultation document the replies had been analysed and members were provided with a summary of the outcome.

The consultation document had been divided into 5 parts, therefore members considered the responses in this manner.

Part 1: Timescale: It was questioned whether the tolls should be set for a further 5 year period or extended to 10 years to coincide with the expiry of the WFO 1992. There was some thought that it should remain at its current level until there was some indication how the fisheries were likely to go, however, the current agreement with the Minister would expire on 31st March and a new structure need to be submitted for consideration prior to this date.

- Members Agreed to apply a five year timescale to the tolls, after which they would be reviewed.

Part 1: Toll Increase: Responses provided divided opinion on whether the tolls should be linked to inflation or a fixed annual increase should apply.

- Members Agreed to link toll increases to inflation.

Part 1: Date of Issue of a licence: It had been suggested all licences should be renewed from the 1st April in any year, however industry members preferred to take out a licence when it was required.

- Members agreed to maintain the status quo and issue licences on request.

Part 2: Offsetting: Ministerial advice was that expenses incurred in setting up the WFO could be recovered in the price of a licence, members were asked to consider whether they wished to recoup the cost of setting up the WFO 1992.

As this cost was historical and it would be impossible to ascertain how much had been spent on developing the Order members felt at this stage the costs should not be recovered but when the WFO expired future costs could be ascertained and recovered.

- Members agreed not to recoup costs for setting up the order at this time.

Part 3: Use of money for propagation: The general consensus among those who responded was that the sum collected for propagation of the fishery should not alter. As this was a long standing arrangement Officers felt this should sum should not be altered.

- Members agreed to retain the current charging system for propagation.

Part 4: Use of money for regulation: In the past it had only been possible to apply a charge for propagation however current legislation meant it was possible to add a further charge to recover the cost of managing the fisheries.

Responses indicated that any costs recovered should reflect the method of fishing, ie. a dredge fishery should attract a higher levy than that for a handworked fishery, however, it was mainly non industry responses which supported the inclusion of an additional levy for regulation.

- Members considered applying a different level of levy depending on the type of fishing taking place and Agreed to maintain the current situation whereby a handwork licence would cost less than that for a dredge fishery.

Moving on from this it then had to be ascertained what level of costs should be recovered. Councillor Goldson noted this meant there would be an additional charge on the licence fees and wondered if this indicated there was likely to be more fishing opportunity in the future, the DCEO advised that the additional funding would not mean there were more fish on the grounds but it could be used to look into other areas such as the razor fishery, mussel propagation etc. The CEO advised this was a mechanism to ensure the Authority were receiving money to assist in the maintenance of work being carried out under the WFO through contributions from those who directly benefit.

- After considerable discussion during which the industry concern that they may be forced out by increasing tolls was expressed, Members agreed to apply an additional charge towards management of the fisheries.
- This was not a unanimous decision with 9 votes in favour and 1 against.

Members discussed the methods by which the additional charge could be applied, either based on a fixed fee adjusted annually in line with inflation or based on a royalties system. There was also discussion on whether other fisheries managers' recoup these costs and at what level. This then led to debate on the cost of survey work and why the industry should pay for in depth surveys when the requirement is put on the Authority by NE. This was refuted by Mr Donnelly who felt NE had been funding the monitoring of work in the Wash for a long time and felt it could be said that this work should be funded by those making the challenge on the fisheries, e.g the industry. He also did not believe the additional information requested by NE made a significant difference to the cost of the survey work and it was up to managers to ensure activities carried out were not damaging to sites, NE only provided information to help with this.

Having considered the table comparing value of fisheries with licence tolls in other districts members believed there was a need to apply a contribution to management but that it should remain proportional.

- **It was Resolved that 5% of the overall cost of a cockle survey should be applied to a handwork licence and 10% to the cost of a dredge licence.**

Proposed: Mr Spray
Seconded: Mr Worrall
5 votes in favour
2 votes against
3 abstentions

Finally the workshop to consider procedure for opening a cockle fishery was considered, the consultation process had provided very little comment, mostly it was procedural change which would be made and letters would be sent to the fishermen in due course.

Members agreed to accept the report.

EIFCA12/14 Dates and locations of planned community engagement meetings

Members were advised these meetings had been organised for all interested parties to be kept up to date with the decisions made by the Authority, all members were also welcome to attend. Mr Morgan requested that in future meetings be held in the evening. It was agreed this would be passed on to the area officers.

At this point Councillors Hannah and Thompson left the building.

EIFCA12/15 Report establishing a Memorandum of Understanding between EIFCA and Natural England

Unfortunately since the papers had been circulated to members the MoU had been reviewed and slight amendments were required.

It was Resolved to provide delegated powers to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Authority to sign of the MoU once the amendments had been made.

Proposed: Councillor Goldson
Seconded: Mr Worrall

EIFCA12/16 Vessel Working Group Report

The report was provided for information and Members agreed to accept the report

EIFCA12/17 Area IFCOs quarterly reports

Councillor Goldson queried the lack of comment regarding Haddock in the area 4 report, but was advised by the CEO that no Haddock was being caught at this time.

Members agreed to accept the report

EIFCA12/18 Vessels quarterly reports

Members agreed to accept the report

EIFCA12/19 Senior Research Officer quarterly report

Members agreed to accept the report

EIFCA12/20 Senior Marine Environment Officer quarterly report

Members agreed to accept the report

**EIFCA12/21 Recent Recreational Sea Angling matters by Tom Pinborough
EIFCA MMO Appointee**

Mr Pinborough requested that the Authority note the requests for support from EIFCA relating to Sea Angling initiative 'litter pick' and 'know your fish sizes campaign'

There being no other business the meeting closed at 1629 hours.