



Planning & Communication Sub-Committee Meeting

To be held at:

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

**Wednesday
24th February 2016
1030 hours**

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

Date: 24 February 2016

Time: 10.30 hours

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



"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."

Agenda

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

Action Items

- 4 Election of Chair - *Clerk*
- 5 Minutes of the Planning and Communication Sub-Committee meeting on 25 February 2015 - *Chair*
- 6 Matters Arising - *Clerk*
- 7 Business Planning Cycle - *A/CEO*
- 8 Communications Report 2015-16 - *A/CEO*
- 9 Strategic Assessment 2016-17 - *Project Officer*
- 10 Business Plan 2016-21 - *A/CEO*

Information Items

- 11 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
A/Chief Executive Officer
9 Feb 16

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 25th February, 2015 at the Eastern IFCA office, King's Lynn

Members Present:

Mr Peter Barham	Chair	MMO Appointee
Mr Shane Bagley		MMO Appointee
Dr Stephen Bolt	Vice Chair	MMO Appointee
Mr Conor Donnelly		NE Representative (by teleconference)
Mr Paul Garnett		MMO Appointee
Mr Tom Pinborough		MMO Appointee
Mr Rob Spray		MMO Appointee
Mr John Stipetic		MMO Representative (by teleconference)
Cllr Tony Turner		Lincolnshire County Council
Mr Stephen Worrall		MMO Appointee

Eastern IFCA Officers Present:

Philip Haslam Chief Executive Officer

P&C15/01 Welcome by the Chair

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

P&C15/02 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Cox (Norfolk County Council), Dr Hirst (EA representative) and Mr Vanstaen (MMO Appointee).

P&C15/03 Declaration of members' interests

There were no declarations of interest other than those which had previously been declared.

P&C15/04 Minutes of the Planning & Communication Sub-Committee meeting held on 26th February 2014

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

Proposed: Paul Garnett

Seconded: Stephen Worrall

P&C15/05 Matters arising

The only matter questioned was whether there was any further information on the continuation of New Burden funding. Dr Bolt advised there would be no decision until after the general election however, AIFCA would continue to reiterate the importance of funding for IFCA's.

P&C15/06 Draft Annual Plan 2015-16

The CEO advised that EIFCA has a duty to produce an Annual Plan as part of the MaCAA duties as well as providing evidence of how public funding is being spent.

The Annual Plan had been written to provide a list of priority actions for the year ahead, which would align with the strategic plan and maintain the Authority's relevance to stakeholders.

Members discussed the various workstreams which were anticipated in the forthcoming year and took note that the two biggest headlines would be management of fisheries activities in Marine Protected Areas and district wide fisheries management action beginning with the regional whelk and bass fisheries.

The CEO listed 8 main priorities for the year, some of which were a continuation of ongoing projects. The Strategic Assessment of fisheries had identified that those most in need of management action were the regional Bass and Whelks fishery, consequently regulation of these species would take priority. It was also noted that the purchase of a second enforcement vessel was also underway with Redbay Boats in Ireland having been awarded the contract.

The CEO highlighted that a project to look into regional bio security measures was designed to ensure that appropriate processes and contingency plans were in place to prevent inadvertent infestation with invasive non-native species. Allied to this was analysis of where liabilities fell in terms of managing existing incidences of invasive species such as American Razor clam. The CEO was concerned that increasing numbers of unexploited razor clam may introduce sustainability risk to the public fishery. The short discussion which followed highlighted that whilst it may be possible to get a dispensation or derogation to allow fishing of the species which were below the EU minimum landing size this could be a very long process. It may however be possible to have a trial fishery through the Habitats Regulations.

Mr Garnett questioned why the date for achievement of some HLOs seemed to have expired, the CEO was able to advise that the current HLOs were set by Defra in 2010 and some have time expired. The Chief Officers group had drafted a set of proposed HLOs but Defra had not yet reviewed or agreed them. The CEO agreed to include an explanatory note with regard to the expired dates.

Mr Pinborough questioned whether the 'mission statement' would also be revisited as he felt some of the terminology used needed reviewing. Dr Bolt advised that once the 4 year report to Parliament had been published, which would highlight the outcomes of each IFCA, at which point changes may be put in place.

Mr Bagley questioned whether the Mussel Regeneration project would be open for discussion, the CEO advised that continuation of the project would need approval to use further funding from the WFO funds.

Mr Worrall questioned the authorship of the word document as it was indicating the plan was written by a previous Officer. The CEO agreed to amend this.

Members felt the Plan reflected that EIFCA had matured and were now in a position to state what needed to be done to meet MaCCA duties.

Members Agreed to approve the Annual Plan 2015/2016 subject to the amendments being made.

Proposed: Dr Bolt
Seconded: John Stipetic

The report provided information on what Communication & Engagement activity had taken place during the year. Essentially it was evidence that EIFCA staff had been out and about within the district to meet stakeholders and to encourage a wider understanding of the work of EIFCA.

2014-2015 had been the first year this level of activity had been carried out without a dedicated Communication Officer, however the effort had been maintained and an additional trailer had been purchased which had proved to be a valuable tool to reach stakeholders who would not normally encounter EIFCA officers during their routine work.

Whilst the CEO believed EIFCA was becoming better known throughout most of the district he highlighted that it was more difficult to attend events along the Lincolnshire coast. Councillor Turner felt it may be worth trying the Lincolnshire County show again but under the auspices of LCC, possibly within their education section. The CEO agreed to email Cllr Turner and enquire about this as well as forwarding a copy of an email he had circulated to Children Services within LCC.

There was some concern with regard to wording on page 8 as it read as though 1/3rd of all officer effort was put into attending outreach events, the CEO agreed to amend this.

It was Agreed that the Communication & Engagement Report be approved and published subject to the changes discussed.

Proposed: Tom Pinborough

Seconded: Rob Spray

PC15/08

Communications Plan 2015-16

Following the benchmarking study it had become apparent that EIFCA were not known to educational establishments, a decision had therefore been made to target schools, hopefully the fish tank and trailer would be taken to one school which would be a hub for other schools in the vicinity to visit during the same day.

It was also anticipated that social media would be actively used to promote events.

Further discussion took place with regard to the use of UEA students to carry out research work, it was felt this would be most beneficial if it was practical with an applied purpose. Mr Spray advised he would be talking to UEA students in his diving capacity but was happy to tag a bit on about EIFCA at the end.

Cost implications were considered, Mr Pinborough queried whether it was possible to generate income from attending events, and a further suggestion was made that maybe stakeholder groups could be encouraged to promote EIFCA at other events.

It was noted there were a couple of date issues within the draft text which the CEO agreed to change. It was also requested that in future years the dots indicating which quarter events would take place be removed and replaced with comment, as this would be consistent with the revised layout of the Annual Plan.

Members agreed to approve the corporate communication plan subject to the requested amendments.

Proposed: Tom Pinborough

Seconded: Stephen Worrall

PC15/09 Any Other Business

There was no other business to be debated, however the Chair took the opportunity to advise members that he had not reapplied to be appointed to EIFCA so this would be his last meeting. Whilst he had enjoyed working with EIFCA he felt committees such as EIFCA needed to evolve and he believed new membership would promote this.

Councillor Turner commented that he was sorry to hear this news as he had always appreciated Mr Barhams' contribution.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 1135 hours

Vision

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Planning and Communications Sub-committee

Action item 7

24 February 2016

Business Planning Cycle

Report by J. Gregory, A/CEO

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to inform members of developments in the way in which business planning is undertaken and to propose a new model that will move from an annual plan to a five year business plan with annual updates.

Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- **Note** the content of the paper
- **Agree** to adopt the new model for business planning

Background

The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MCAA 2009) introduced a new framework for managing the demands put on our seas. The objective was to ensure clean healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas, by putting in place better systems for delivering sustainable development of the marine and coastal environment. Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (Eastern IFCA), and the District for which it has responsibility, was established by the Secretary of State under sections 149 and 150 of MCAA 2009 and took on its full statutory role from the 1st April 2011. Eastern IFCA has clearly defined duties to manage sustainable fisheries and conserve the wider marine environment within the coastal waters off Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk.

During the five years since inception Eastern IFCA has followed Defra guidance that provided a common set of Success Criteria and multiple High Level Objectives¹ which were at the core of annual plans. The guidance outlined how IFCAs could monitor and evaluate whether they were meeting their objectives, success criteria and ultimately the agreed vision of what their organisations should be achieving. It was intended to help IFCAs in being more accountable to those that they work for and with, including their local communities, other IFCAs and delivery partners. There were seven Success Criteria and twenty three High Level Objectives, which resulted in a relatively complex reporting mechanism.

It was planned to review the performance criteria and during 2015 Defra led on the development of the new High Level Objectives and Success Criterion. This was undertaken in conjunction with the IFCA Chief Officers Group and the Association of IFCAs in order to develop something that is meaningful in the current context.

¹ Guidance to Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities on monitoring and evaluation, and measuring performance. 2011, Defra

The new performance framework incorporates the five High Level Objectives from the UK Marine Policy Statement, from which flow five Success Criterion, with each being underpinned by intended outcomes and associated indicators. The Minister declined to issue guidance to mandate the new framework and instead it was agreed and adopted at the IFCA Chief Officers Group and the Association of IFCAs. Eastern IFCA agreed to adopt the new criteria at the October 2015 meeting of the full Authority.

The annual planning cycle has evolved during the five years that Eastern IFCA has existed and for 2015-16 an annual Strategic Assessment was introduced at the November 2014 meeting of the Regulation and Compliance sub-committee, initially as a mechanism to support a new approach to the Byelaw Review. The Strategic Assessment is a comprehensive risk assessment of all fisheries and conservation issues within the district. It combines fisheries data and other evidence to identify fisheries and MPAs that require management measures or changes in management measures and will list them for action in order of priority. The output of the Strategic Assessment is an important element in the annual planning process.

Since inception Eastern IFCA has, in common with other IFCAs, experienced significant increases in demand. The most significant element of this has been the revised approach to the management of fisheries in European Marine Sites with the requirement to assess the impact of fishing and to introduce management measures where required. Alongside this has been the gradual introduction of Marine Conservation Zones, which has recently included Cromer Shoal Chalk Bed in the tranche 2 designations. In addition significant reform of the Common Fisheries Policy has transformed the way in which fisheries are managed across the EU. This has included the introduction of a requirement for fisheries to be exploited to Maximum Sustainable Yield, which will inevitably have an impact upon the management of inshore fisheries.

The period of austerity experienced since 2008 has continued to have a significant impact upon public finances and in general there has been a downward trajectory in budget allocations for both government departments and local authorities. This has had an impact upon Eastern IFCA with a 25% reduction in budget levied upon the three funding authorities. Additionally, the 'new burdens' funding received from Defra had not been guaranteed until recently when it was confirmed to 2020. In such a climate the future of funding from each of the three funding authorities cannot be taken for granted. Indeed, at the last meeting with the three Finance Directors during the autumn of 2015 it was indicated that a standstill budget would be appreciated. This represents a reduction in real terms and whilst 2016-17 will be stable financially the ongoing pressure on local authority budgets may impact upon the Eastern IFCA levy in future years.

Driven at least in part by the austerity agenda is a significant review of marine related activities overseen by Defra. This includes the collaborative programme between the MMO and IFCAs and is now linking to a wider review of governmental departments' marine related activity, which includes organisations such as the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. Whilst still at an early stage this has the potential to substantially alter the landscape in the marine sector.

Business Planning – Legacy Model

The pre-existing means of business planning is largely based upon the guidance initially provided by Defra when the ten IFCAs were established in 2011². This provided that an annual plan and subsequent annual report should be published with copies provided to the Secretary of State. It was largely based around the previous Success Criteria and associated High Level Objectives (ante) together with sections on resources, ways of working, staff development and risk management.

² Guidance to Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities on Annual Planning and Reporting 2011, Defra

This approach meant that planning tended to be considered in annual time-frames with an absence of forward planning for future financial years. Additionally, there were separate annual plans for enforcement, environment, research and communications and engagement, with the associated administrative workload.

Whilst this approach has served Eastern IFCA well it is suggested that a new approach would be of benefit.

Business Planning – Revised Model

The factors outlined under 'Background' above combine to provide a substantial driver to ensure that Eastern IFCA operates as an efficient and effective organisation and is effectively 'on top of its game'. An important element of this is an approach to planning that demonstrates a clear understanding of where it fits in the strategic landscape, its ability to deliver what is required over an expanded timeframe and a clear rationale behind its priorities.

This has led to the development of a rolling five year Business Plan which brings together all elements of activity undertaken by the organisation. An important element of this approach is to demonstrate that the work of Eastern IFCA as 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. As a consequence, the plan shows a clear linkage to Defra's recently released vision and strategy because, although IFCAs are not Defra bodies, they do deliver into the Defra remit and understanding the link demonstrates the wider awareness of Eastern IFCA.

The plan is intended to project five years in advance with annual reviews in order to update the strategic and financial context and to prioritise and plan for each financial year. Overall priorities for the Authority are established based upon the annual cycle together with specific priorities and plans for enforcement, environment, research and communications and engagement. These are set out in appendices to the Business Plan.

The annual cycle is informed by the Strategic Assessment, which comprises two assessments – a data driven, initial assessment to determine the risk of sustainability issues associated with groups of fisheries and an additional assessment which takes into account incomplete datasets and contextual and political issues as well as expert knowledge from officers.

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. This would mean that instead of there being separate annual plans for enforcement, environment, research and communication & engagement alongside an overall Annual Plan there would be a single Business Plan with concise appendices to cover all activity.

Background Documents

Minutes of the 21st Eastern IFCA meeting held on 28 October 2015

Minutes of the Regulation and Compliance sub-committee held on 25 November 2014

Vision

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Planning and Communications Sub-committee

Action item 8

24 February 2016

Corporate Communications Report 2014-15

Report by J. Gregory, A/CEO

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to present the outputs of corporate communications plan for 2015-16, to provide an overview of activity during the past three years and to outline the way forward.

Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- **Note** the outreach activity undertaken during the last three years
- **Note** the change in approach to planning communication and engagement activity
- **Agree** that the bench marking survey will not be repeated
- **Approve** the corporate communications report 2015-16.
- **Direct** that it be published online.

Background

The Authority approved the communications plan for 2015-16 with a view to building upon the visibility of Eastern IFCA generated in 2013-14 and the engagement with "harder to reach" stakeholders during 2014-15. The primary objective for 2015-16 was to engage with young people in educational establishments. Significant efforts were made during the year with a much reduced budget and the activities are reflected in the attached report.

Analysis

2015-16

Building on the achievements of previous years and with appropriate infrastructure in place (aquarium and display trailer) the activities undertaken proved to be successful in terms of achieving visibility and being almost universally well received. There was some 'scope creep' inasmuch as events were taken on in addition to those planned for the year and whilst these were serviced and had a positive impact, there was an impact on our ability to roster staff for other work.

2013-16

During the last three years Eastern IFCA has worked to address the issues identified by the 2012 benchmarking survey through the development of a Communication and Engagement Strategy and annual plans to prioritise issues.

During 2013-14 activity was concentrated on raising awareness generally of EIFCA and what it does. This was achieved by a range of activities including attendance at large public events (e.g. county shows), regular community engagement meetings, developing partnership working through the establishment of MoUs and utilising both conventional and social media.³

The approach for 2014-15 was developed to address some of the harder to reach groups and as a consequence the nature of the activity undertaken was refined, for example the events attended were smaller scale and addressed different audiences. Because community engagement meetings tended to be dominated by commercial fishermen with a relatively narrow agenda and a tendency to seek to dominate a meeting, they were discontinued and instead the Authority procured a second hand display trailer from the EA to enable officers to move community engagement from set piece Town Hall style events to more bespoke, clinic style engagement. The trailer proved a very cost effective means of targeting groups of stakeholders to draw their opinions in an atmosphere more conducive to meaningful engagement.⁴

During 2015-16 activity continued along similar lines to the previous year but with a focus on educational establishments to address the identified gap in awareness identified in the benchmark survey.⁵

During this time investments were made in a bespoke aquarium tank built on a road trailer together with a gazebo displaying EIFCA corporate branding. When combined with the display trailer EIFCA has the appropriate infrastructure to put on attractive, interactive and informative displays. This combination has proved to be very successful in gaining maximum exposure to a variety of stakeholders at community events such as the Cromer Crab and Lobster festival and they have also been used to inspire the next generation of stakeholders during school visits.

It should be noted that it is sometimes difficult to judge the quality and effect of interactions during outreach events, particular public shows. There is no doubt that the display put on by officers is attractive and engaging, indeed it is often the 'star of the show', but the number of meaningful interactions that arise as a consequence can be varied and overall is likely to be relatively low.

Whilst it had originally been intended to repeat the benchmarking exercise during the first half of 2016 in order to assess progress it is judged that this would be an unnecessary use of public funds. It is clear that Eastern IFCA is now well established and not only is it well known in coastal communities and with relevant stakeholders but it is also able to influence where it is appropriate to do so.

Conclusion

The approach taken to outreach activity since Eastern IFCA was established has proved to be successful in helping to establish the organisation as an important player in the inshore environment. The organisation is now known in coastal communities and well established amongst stakeholders. As such, the investment in communications and engagement has been a good one given that it is resource intensive in terms of people time.

Having achieved what we set out to do it is appropriate to consider the way forward. Given the high level of work that currently falls to the Authority and the complexities involved it may not be sustainable to maintain the same level of outreach activity in the future. As such, whilst future years will still see similar kinds of activity it is likely to be on a lower scale and with a focus on being more efficient, for example by utilising social

³ Eastern IFCA Communication and Engagement Report 2013-14

⁴ Eastern IFCA Communication and Engagement Report 2014-15

⁵ Eastern IFCA Communication and Engagement Report 2015-16

media to greater extent. With this in mind it is proposed to incorporate communications and engagement as 'business as usual' in the proposed five year Business Plan (agenda item 10). This will ensure that it will be prioritised and planed in the context of other demands and what the Authority wants to achieve overall.

Appendices:

1. Eastern IFCA Communications report 2015-16

Vision

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Planning and Communications Sub-committee

Action item 9

24 February 2016

Strategic Assessment 2016-17

Report by: Luke Godwin, Staff Officer

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to present the content of the Strategic Assessment for 2016-17 and to make recommendations on priorities for 2016-17.

Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- **Note** the content of the Strategic Assessment for 2016-17
- **Approve** the priorities identified by the Strategic Assessment

Background

Eastern IFCA's duty to manage sustainable fisheries includes a wide range of environments, fishing gears and business models across the diverse inshore areas of Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. The requirements of the many competing demands of our duties in terms of research, regulation and environmental assessments often outweigh the resources and as such prioritisation is necessary to tackle issues on the basis of the risk posed.

In addition, the inshore fishing sector encompasses a dynamic marine environment and ever changing fishing industry and as such, regular prioritisation is required.

In 2015 Eastern IFCA produced its first Strategic Assessment; an analysis of the available data and evidence combined with the expert knowledge of the officers which determined and agreed a level of risk associated with each fishery and an associated priority with regards to that years' work loads.

The 2015 assessment prioritised the whelk and bass fisheries within the district. This resulted in work streams across the district which aimed to address the risks associated with these fisheries. The whelk emergency byelaw was created and implemented as a consequence of this assessment and the development of bass measures by the European Commission meant that action was no longer required by Eastern IFCA.

The 2016/17 Strategic Assessment has now been conducted to determine priorities for the coming financial year.

Analysis

The Strategic Assessment encompasses two assessments – a data driven, initial assessment to determine the risk of sustainability issues associated with groups of

fisheries and an additional assessment which takes into account incomplete datasets and contextual and political issues as well as expert knowledge from officers.

The initial assessment conducted in the 2015/16 Strategic Assessment used four criteria to determine risk: weight of landed catch, value of landed catch, ICES advice and an assessment of available evidence. In addition to these, two new criteria were used in the 2016/17 assessment: an assessment of the current regulations and an impact score based on ecosystem impacts of the gear type associated with each group. It is felt that these additional criteria present a more balanced indication of the risk posed by different fisheries.

Based on this assessment, groups were ranked in order of risk (1 being highest risk and 10 being lowest risk); these are presented in table 1 below.

Group	Annual landings weight rank	Annual value rank	ICES advice rank	Available information rank	Fisheries management rank	Gear impact rank	Mean Rank	Overall Rank
Shrimp/prawns	3	1	5	6	3	1	3.2	1
Crab and lobsters	4	2	1	8	1	10	4.3	2
Skate/Ray	7	7	2	1	6	4	4.5	3
Demersal	5	6	3	4	5	5	4.7	4
Flatfish	6	5	4	5	8	2	5	5
Dogfish/sharks	9	9	5	1	4	2	5	5
Cephalopods	10	10	5	1	2	6	5.7	7
Bivalve Mollusc	1	3	5	10	9	7	5.8	8
Whelks	2	4	5	9	10	9	6.5	9
Pelagic	8	8	5	7	7	8	7.2	10

Table 1. Fisheries are ordered by the risk of sustainability issues associated with the initial criteria. A fishery is ranked higher if it a higher risk according to the assessment of each category (i.e. 1 = highest risk and 10 = lowest risk).

Table 1 shows the effect of the work conducted regarding whelk fisheries in 2015; the fisheries management introduced for the protection of a long-term, sustainable whelk fishery and the planned research projects into whelk fisheries has had the effect of reducing the risk associated with this fishery.

Similarly, despite being associated with the greatest amount of annual landings, bivalve molluscs are ranked 8th (out of 10) which reflects the level of regulation within the fishery and Eastern IFCA more complete understanding of the fishery. It is important to note that, whilst risk associated with these fisheries is reduced as a result of Eastern IFCA work, failing to maintain those associated work streams (for example the cockle survey) would likely have the effect of increasing the risk associated with that fishery.

The highest risk fisheries were identified as the Shrimp fisheries and the crab and lobster fisheries. In order to prioritise these fisheries, the initial assessment is complimented by narrative around the contextual and political issues each fishery faces. Table 2 below indicates the priority associated with each groups as determined through this additional assessment.

Group	Annual landings weight rank	Annual value rank	ICES advice rank	Available information rank	Fisheries management rank	Gear impact rank	Mean Rank	Overall Rank
Shrimp/prawns	3	1	5	6	3	1	3.2	1
Crabs and lobsters	4	2	1	8	1	10	4.3	2
Skate/Ray	7	7	2	1	6	4	4.5	3
Demersal	5	6	3	4	5	5	4.7	4
Flatfish	6	5	4	5	8	2	5	5
Dogfish/sharks	9	9	5	1	4	2	5	5
Cephalopods	10	10	5	1	2	6	5.7	7
Bivalve Mollusc	1	3	5	10	9	7	5.8	8
Whelks	2	4	5	9	10	9	6.5	9
Pelagic	8	8	5	7	7	8	7.2	10

Table 2. Strategic priority is indicated by colour – red = high, amber = medium and green = low.

The highest priority fisheries were identified as the shrimp fishery and the crab and lobster fishery.

The shrimp fishery is a locally and nationally important fishery with very little management; Eastern IFCA have no mechanism to control effort or gear through our current byelaws should the fishery start to perform poorly or to address fishers concerns. In addition, this fishery has been assessed as potentially damaging to the Wash and North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site and as such, management measures are required to be in place by December 2016.

The crab and lobster fisheries similarly have no mechanisms through which Eastern IFCA could introduce measures if required and has been assessed as potentially unsustainable at current levels. Additionally the main fishery is located within a newly designated Marine Conservation Zone (Cromer Shoals Chalk Beds), the protection of which may require management. The crab and lobster fisheries are however, the subject of a Defra review and, whilst a high priority, requires synergy with that project.

During the resulting discussions and meeting, it was found that key sustainability issues could be identified through the assessment rather than simply applying a priority to each fishery. In this way, key issues reflected by more than one group can be prioritised as high despite being associated with medium priority fisheries. The example of this in the 2016/17 assessment is unregulated fishing – this issue is thought to be potentially having a detrimental effect on several groups which were assessed as medium priority (skate/rays, demersal and flatfish) and is particularly a concern with regards to the bass fishery. The sustainability issues are presented in table 3 below.

Table 3. Key sustainability issues identified for 2016/17			
Sustainability issue	Fishery	Priority	Rationale
Eastern IFCA bottom towed gear management	Shrimp fishery (and other bottom towed gear fisheries)	High	Associated with the highest risk and highest priority fishery. Required outputs are the protection of sensitive MPA habitats, gear trials and support for industry viability towards accreditation.
Shrimp fishery information gathering	Shrimp fishery	High	Gather data and evidence to better understand fishing effort both spatially and temporally to inform

			wider management of the shrimp fishery.
Crab and lobster fisheries management / review inherited byelaws in line with wider management needs	Crustaceans	High	The crab and lobster fisheries within the district are highly valuable and recent scientific evidence suggests that they are in need of greater management. Defra are presently leading on a project to further the sustainability of crab and lobster fisheries and a partnership approach with Defra is required. Eastern IFCA crustacean byelaws need to be reviewed in line with this Defra project.
Potting fisheries on the North Norfolk Coast in relation to protection of Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ	Crustaceans		The Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ has been designated. Management measures (if required) to protect the features need to be in place by Dec 2018. Early assessment will highlight data needs to build a robust conclusion.
Unregulated netting / fishing management	Demersal Skate and rays Flatfish	High	Associated with three medium risk fisheries – this output is likely to have wide-ranging benefits. Eastern IFCA is currently unable to enforce unregulated fisheries and a two-year evidence gathering project has provided limited data. In addition, the inherited NESFC 'fixed engine' byelaw requires review in line with a wider management approach to non-commercial netting.
Mussel die-off	Bivalve molluscs	High	High degree of concern from the industry regarding die-off of mussels in The Wash. Research into the cause has been conducted ad-hoc over the last couple of years but tests (conducted by Cefas) have been inconclusive. Additional investigation is required.
Lack of fisheries data	Skate and rays, Demersal Flatfish	Medium	Three groups identified as medium may present a higher risk in future assessments. All three fishery groups suffer from a lack of data, particularly in relation to spatial data and effort.
New conservation designations within district	All	Medium	In addition to the newly designated MCZ, two new EMS and extensions to two existing EMS are anticipated within the district over the next year. Evidence will be required to inform Habitat Regulations Assessments for fisheries in these sites. A key data gap is information on fixed and drift netting.
Mussel regeneration	Bivalve molluscs	Medium	Associated with the medium priority bivalve mollusc fisheries – in

			particular the Wash Fishery Order regulated mussel fishery. . This output will have both economic and wider environmental benefits.
Biosecurity measures	Bivalve molluscs	Medium	A robust biosecurity plan / contingency plan will have a protective effect on the most valuable fishery in the district (the cockle fishery) and the private shellfish fisheries in The Wash.
Review trawling restriction (inherited byelaw)	Demersal / flatfish	Medium	An inherited byelaw relating to trawling restrictions for certain sized vessels is currently in place for the former North-Eastern Sea Fisheries Committee part of the district, which is at odds with an Eastern IFCA byelaw for the rest of the district. This byelaw requires review taking into account the sensitive sole nursery grounds on the Humber Estuary and the risks associated with demersal fisheries in general.
Review Regulatory Notices	Shrimps/prawns (also demersal) and hand gathering.	Medium	The four existing Regulatory Notices created under Eastern IFCA's Protected Area Byelaw in 2014 were designed to be reviewed at set intervals. The first review must be completed by March 2017.
Monitoring fishing activity in MPAs	All	Medium	The majority of fisheries assessed for impacts on EMSs were found to not cause adverse effect at current levels of activity. Fishing activity monitoring plans are required to demonstrate how changes in spatial distribution, gear types and effort levels will be recorded. The plans also need to show how Eastern IFCA will respond to changes in fishing activities in relation to potential impacts on designated MPAs.
Wash Fishery Order 1992	Bivalve molluscs	Medium	The Wash Fishery Order 1992 expires in 2022. The making of a new Order will take considerable time and as such needs to be considered well in advance of the expiry date.

Conclusion

The Strategic Assessments provides an important planning tool and has benefited from adjustments to the initial assessment – i.e. the inclusion of an assessment of current regulations and ecosystem impacts of associated fishing gears.

The outputs of the 2016/17 assessment reflect how directing resource to identified sustainability issues has the effect of reducing risk associated with a species or fishery. Both the whelk and bass fishery have lower risks as a result of work conducted during

2015/16. That said, the importance of the continuation of this work is crucial to maintaining a lower risk for these fisheries.

The 2016/17 Strategic Assessment has highlighted the importance of developing shrimp management over the next financial year and has also highlighted gaps in the crab and lobster fishery which can be addressed in line with the Defra project. In addition, unregulated fishing has been highlighted as a high priority because of its effect on several fisheries, not least the bass fishery which is still at risk from this poorly understood activity levels.

Appendices:

2. Eastern IFCA Strategic Assessment 2016-17

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



Planning and Communications Sub-committee meeting

Action Item 10

24 February 2016

2016-21 Business Plan

Report by: J. Gregory, A/CEO

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to submit the draft Business Plan for 2016-21 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 2016-17
- **Approve** the Business Plan 2016-21, including the priorities and plans for 2016-17

Background

As set out in the paper supporting agenda item 7, a rolling five year Business Plan has been developed, which brings together all elements of activity undertaken by the organisation.

The plan is intended to project five years in advance with annual reviews in order 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 2016-21

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 recently released vision and strategy because, although IFCAs 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 2016-17

The overall priorities for 2016-17 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 Environment and Research priorities are set out in Appendices 5 and 6.

The Communications and Engagement Plan is set out in Appendix 7.

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:

1. Draft Business Plan 2016-21