40 MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL, SCIENCE AND BYELAW SUB-COMMITTEE on 9th MAY 2023 AT TRUCKHAVEN , CARNFORTH 10.00 AM.

PRESENT – MEMBERS

Mr B. Leigh Chair MMO Appointee

Dr A Richardson MMO Appointee

Mr S. Brown MMO Appointee

Mr K Thompson MMO Appointee

Mr S. Manning MMO Appointee

Dr C Mihailovici MMO Appointee

Mr N. Baxter MMO Appointee

Mr L. Browning Natural England

Mr S. Johnston MMO

NWIFCA OFFICERS ATTENDING

M Taylor CEO, J Moulton HOE, A Plumeridge SS, A Nicholson Clerk, G Edwards IFCO/Comms

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Dr J Andrews, Mr P Capper, Mr J Turner

41 CHAIR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS (Agenda Item 1)

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and welcomed Mr Mark Taylor CEO to his first meeting of TSB.

He reminded members to sign the attendance register

CEO introduced himself to the committee ensuring members that he wants closer collaboration between members and officers and work had begun on a long list of priorities.

42 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda item 2)

No declarations of interest had been received prior to the meeting. The Chair reminded members to declare any interests prior to speaking on an agenda item. Mr Manning declared an interest in agenda items 6, 7 and 8. Dr Richardson declared an interest in agenda item 7

43 MINUTES OF TSB MEETING 7th FEBRUARY 2023 (Agenda item 3)

An amendment to the word DATE on page 3 and replace with actual date.

RESOLUTION: TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING

Proposed: K Thompson, Seconded: S Brown, All in favour, carried

44 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES (Agenda Item 4)

There were no matters raised.

45 BYELAW UPDATES – (Agenda Item 5)

HOE reported that Byelaw 1 (MCRS) has been sent to the Secretary of State for signature, and Dr Andrews had written to the Minister in a bid to speed up the process. He said that the Byelaw Strategy Working Group (BSWG) would restart shortly together with work on the netting byelaw once current workloads allowed.

Mr Brown felt strongly that the vessel capacity byelaw must become an urgent priority. CEO agrees that the BSWG must meet as soon as is feasible to do so.

46 SURVEY AND INSPECTION REPORT (Agenda Item 6)

Senior Scientist presented her report and stated that only mussel surveys and inspections had been completed recently and referred members to the report for greater detail. Mr Manning declared an interest in this item.

She said with regard to the seed mussel fishery at South America and the Falklands the tides were not favourable in June and July so earliest will be early August, an HRA will be prepared prior to any surveys so we can ensure a quicker turnaround once surveys were completed. Due to the tight timeline prior to the August TSB meeting, she asked that a vote be taken on opening the fishery via email once surveys were complete.

Mr Manning disagreed with this approach to HRAs and surveys and felt that the dredging companies should fund their own surveys and it appeared to people outside the committee that dredgers receive preferential treatment. Mr Browning sought to reassure Mr Manning that this was the correct way forward and that all HRAs contained relevant information. Mr Manning went on to voice his concern with votes being taken by email.

Dr Richardson supported the science team approach and felt it to be very proactive. Mr Brown said he would like to see the process for opening up all fisheries speeded up.

The Chair reiterated that overall members wanted the process and timeline optimized, and that email voting was acceptable within the constitution.

Mr Manning went on to comment on Low Bottom and stated that this was historically a very important bed and was a commercial fishery, SS agreed to modify the report.

PROPOSAL: AGREE THAT TSB BE INFORMED OF THE RESULTS OF FINAL INSPECTIONS VIA EMAIL, AND THEY CONSIDER A PROPSAL OF THE OPENING OF THE FISHERY SUBJECT TO HRA

Proposed: Dr Richardson Seconded: Dr Mihailovici , 8 in favour, 1 abstention carried

THE REPORT WAS RECEIVED

47 SCIENCE REPORT (Agenda Item 7)

Senior Scientist referred to her report updating members on the work undertaken by the science team in the last quarter. She reported on progress in the procurement of a drone, a draft cockle management plan, survey season schedule and mussel MLS. She confirmed that the draft cold weather protocol was now available on the website.

She has recently attended a meeting regarding the Dee Cockle Fishery Order, discussions are at a preliminary stage and the committee will be updated accordingly.

The FISP funding submission was unfortunately unsuccessful, however she had received useful feedback which can be utilised moving forward. Salford University remain keen to work on this project and other avenues will be explored to progress this.

A new sampling schedule for this summer has been developed for whelks, the aim being to identify the size at maturity in our district.

Dr Mihailovici referred to the cold weather protocol and suggested that a hot weather protocol also be considered.

Mr Brown commented that the Dee Cockle Order can be very controversial and to proceed with extreme caution. CEO said he felt it important that we remain involved.

Mr Manning thanked Senior Scientist for her efforts in trying to secure funds for the shrimp project, he felt that there is a significant problem and can monies be found for water testing at least. He also raised the possibility of permit holders ‘renting out’ their permits when they are unable to be used. He went on to request consideration be given to opening the cockle beds earlier in the year, due to demands having changed post Brexit.

THE REPORT WAS RECEIVED

48 MUSSEL MLS (Agenda Item 8)

Senior Scientist updated members on this exercise. The main aim was to identify the population and structure of the beds, area of stunted mussel and proportion of barnacled and pearled mussel, the preliminary reports are detailed within the report.

Mr Manning thanked her for the work already done but suggested that this was just a snapshot of the overall picture on Foulney. The export market post Brexit has changed significantly regarding the acceptance of pearled and barnacled mussel and this needs to be taken into consideration for the future. Senior Scientist reported that more in depth surveys will be undertaken in future.

Mr Brown welcomed the work undertaken, but reiterated his preference to deregulate the fisheries and leave them open all the time, saying there were insufficient permit holders to scratch the surface of shellfish resources.

THE REPORT WAS RECEIVED

49 ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda Item 9)

There was no additional business

The Chair thanked everyone for attending – meeting closed at 11.15