

**NWIFCA Quarterly Meeting:
9 December 2021: 11.00 a.m.**

**AGENDA
ITEM NO.
11**

Chief Officer Report: September November 2021

Purpose of Report: Information

Recommendation: Receive the report

Contents:

- i. Working arrangements**
- ii. Personnel, Health & Safety**
- iii. Communications & Byelaw update**
- iv. Association of IFCA**
- v. Defra**
- vi. Review of IFCA policies, procedures and governance**
- vii. Dispensations scheme**

i. Working arrangements

1. Carnforth and Whitehaven Offices were open throughout the quarter while covid precautions were maintained. Government guidance to work at home where possible remains in place. A mix of home and office working has continued. Authority (16 September) and TSB (2 November) meetings were held at Truckhaven conference facilities, Carnforth. The Morecambe Town Hall continues to be unavailable
2. Carnforth Office has suffered ingress of damp to the south wall putting the ground floor enforcement office out of use since October while investigations and repairs are undertaken. Repairs are being addressed by the landlord's maintenance team. Costs are uncertain at time of writing but are expected to be managed within the 2021-22 budget. Officers are being accommodated elsewhere in the building and with continued home working.
3. Officer sick leave has prevented any patrols by NW Protector this quarter. Repair and maintenance has continued but also slowed by the sick leave. See enforcement report for more detail of patrol work.

ii. Personnel, Health & Safety, Complaints

4. We are pleased to welcome Ms Annabelle Plumeridge to the Authority as Senior Scientist from 2 November. Ms Plumeridge brings good experience of IFCA Science work from 2 years at Kent and Essex IFCA. Mr Jon Haines continues as Depute Senior Scientist. IFCA Elliott Waltho resigned in September to take up an advisor post with Natural England. Recruitment of a replacement has commenced.
5. **Health and Safety** There have been no notifiable incidents up to end of November 2021. The H&S policy continues to be developed and amended to take account of changing circumstances with the advice of the retained H&S consultant.
6. **Complaints:** Mr Thompson has referred a complaint against the Authority to the Local Government Ombudsman. The Authorities' lawyer has been informed.

iii. **Communications and byelaws**

7. The database and website are now updated as required by the Administration team. The Clerk has commenced collating information from science and enforcement officers to develop more regular postings from the Authority on social media
8. Issuing of all permits is up to date.
9. **A byelaw working group** has been established reporting to TSB to develop a new byelaw development strategy to address the remaining byelaws inherited by the Authority from predecessor bodies.
10. Update on byelaws in development:
 - I. **Byelaw 3** Cockle and mussel permit scheme: The Authority was pleased to receive notice from the MMO IFCA Byelaws team in October that they have no further comments on the draft byelaw. The byelaw and RIA have now been referred to Defra for government checks and signature by the Minister.
 - II. **Byelaw 1** Minimum Conservation Reference Size (MCRS): MMO byelaw team comments on the draft byelaw were addressed. The byelaw is now considered final and a confirmation application pack of information required has been compiled. The byelaw and RIA will be returned to MMO for confirmation as soon as possible subject to further assessment from MMO or Defra.
 - III. **Byelaw 2** North Wirral Foreshore Byelaw. MMO byelaw team comments on the draft byelaw were addressed. The draft byelaw is now considered final and a confirmation application pack of information required has been compiled. The byelaw and RIA will be returned to MMO for confirmation as soon as possible subject to further assessment from MMO or Defra.
 - IV. **Byelaw 4** Potting permit byelaw: Comments on the draft byelaw and RIA received from MMO in March have now been addressed. Revised versions will be returned to MMO for further scrutiny as soon as possible.
 - V. **Netting byelaw:** A replacement byelaw to consolidate the Authority's various netting byelaws is being drafted. A verbal report of progress was received by the TSB at the 2 November meeting, Drafting of the byelaw is continuing.
11. An annual Plan working group has been established to work on refreshing the structure and content of the Authority statutory Annual Plans and Annual Reports. The group met on 29 September and will report to the Authority in due course.

iv. **Association of IFCA**

12. The members Forum of AIFCA met online on 7 September 2021. NWIFCA Chairman and CEO attended. The agenda of that meeting is at Annex A.
13. The next meeting is scheduled for 7 December 2021. Further information on the work of the AIFCA and meeting papers can be found at <http://www.association-ifca.org.uk/> where IFCA members can sign into a members area or contact the Chief Officer: Robert.clark@association-ifca.org.uk

v. **Defra**

14. **MAFCO**. Meetings of this Defra / IFCA Liaison committee were held on 8 September and 3 November. Papers are marked sensitive by Defra.

15. IFCA were invited to inform Defra of their main areas of concern in relation to delivery of IFCA objectives. Chief Officers reported a variety of work programs including local fisheries issues such as the bass discard exemption SI raised by NWIFCA. Also the appointment of members, the process for development of byelaws and IFCA funding were areas of concern. Defra would like to receive invitations to attend IFCA meetings. Of course IFCA meetings are public and details of meetings and papers are posted on IFCA websites in good time.
16. Defra reported they intend to make further announcement about designation of Highly Protected Marine Areas in 2022. Defra is also developing the Fisheries Management plans policy and intend to provide new guidance to IFCA on the content of Annual plans. Work is underway to address the problem of cruise ships anchoring in sensitive areas.
17. The Committee received verbal reports from other Defra bodies on:
 - Drafting of a Joint Fisheries Statement from Devolved administrations,
 - Marine Natural Capital;
 - A marine ecosystem assessment programme.
 - The consultation on MPA compensatory measures (now closed).
18. There has been no announcement on the details of the spending review as it will affect IFCA.

vi. RPA review of NWIFCA Policies, Procedures and Governance

19. The final review report was received by NWIFCA on October 26. The report was sent to all officers and members who have been asked to ensure it is not circulated further at this stage.
20. The report will be considered by the NWIFCA Finance and Personnel Committee under the Chairmanship of Cllr Anthony Markley. This Committee will determine any further action arising from the review
21. There will be an opportunity for members to comment on the review reports under a separate confidential agenda item

vii. Dispensations scheme for members

22. Under the Localism act, the Authority is required to keep an up to date list of records of any disclosable interests held by members. Any MMO appointee members who has not completed a declaration of interest form should seek to comply with the localism act by obtaining the form from the Clerk, completing and returning it as soon as possible.
23. In respect of declarations of interest, the Authority has resolved that members should be allowed to speak at meetings of the Authority on matters in which they have a disclosable interest subject to limitations. The limitations under which members may speak on such matters should be set out in a dispensations scheme for members which should be drafted as soon as possible. MMO appointee, Mr Leigh has offered his services to assist drafting such a scheme.
24. We intend that a draft scheme for approval by members should be available for the March meeting.

Annex A

AIFCA MEMBERS FORUM

7th September 2021 @ 10:30 AM



Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Declaration of interests
3. [Minutes and actions AIFCA Members Forum Meeting \(June 2021\)](#)
4. [Minutes Directors Meeting \(June 2021\)](#)
5. Chairman's announcements
6. Progress reports
 - 6a. Member's appointment process (MMO)
 - 6b. Newsletter (verbal)
 - 6c. HPMAs (verbal)
 - 6d. National angling strategy (verbal)
 - 6e. [Towards Regional Fisheries Management Plans. AIFCA project update.](#)
 - 6f. [Freedom of Information \(verbal\)](#)

Items for decision

7. [AIFCA Budget control statement](#)
8. [IFCA Spending Review 21 submission](#)
9. [Member's questionnaire results and action plan](#)

Items for note

10. [Chief officers report](#)
11. Training officer report
12. Marine Protected Areas: guidance for developing compensatory measures consultation Response