

## FISHERIES WORKING GROUP

COMMITTEE ROOM 4, WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEEN

FRIDAY 26 FEBRUARY, 2016

- Present:** Councillors A M Allan (as substitute for I W Gray), A Buchan, C Buchan, P K Johnston and S W Smith.
- Apologies:** Councillors A Gardiner, I W Gray, M Roy and M Watt
- Officers:** M Brebner, Team Manager – European Policy & Programmes; D McDonald, Industry Support Executive (Rural & Maritime); and V McCaskill, Committee Officer.
- Also attending:** E Balestri, Scottish Association of Fish Producer Organisations  
J Buchan, Scottish Fishermen's Organisation and J Mouat, Aegir Consultancy.

### 1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Code of Conduct. No interests were intimated.

### 2. APPOINTMENT TO THE CHAIR

In light of recent changes to the membership of the Group, members were asked to consider the appointment of the Chair going forward. It was **agreed** unanimously that Cllr C Buchan would continue in the role of Chair.

### 3. PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

In taking decisions on the undernoted items of business, the Working Group **agreed**, in terms of Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 to:-

- (1) have due regard to the need to :-
  - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation,
  - (b) advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it,
  - (c) foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, and
- (2) consider the contents of equality impact assessments, where provided, and to take those into account when reaching a decision.

### 4. MINUTE OF MEETING OF 25 SEPTEMBER, 2015

The Minute of Meeting of 25 September, 2015, had been circulated and was **noted** as a correct record.

### 5. MATTERS ARISING

With reference to the Cairnbulg beach clean, it was highlighted that regular informal beach cleans take place at Peterhead beach. It was **agreed** that officers would circulate time lapse footage from the Cairnbulg beach clean to members.

## **6. PRESENTATION: THE SCOTTISH FISHING INDUSTRY DISCARD INITIATIVE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF SELECTIVE FISHING GEAR IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EU LANDING OBLIGATION**

A presentation was delivered to the Group by Elena Balestri, Scottish Association of Fish Producer Organisations, Jennifer Mouat, the Aegir Consultancy, and Jimmy Buchan, Scottish Fishermen's Organisation. The presentation began by looking at challenges to the fleet as a result of the EU Landing Obligation and the solutions/mitigations to these challenges. Information was then provided on work already undertaken on gear selectivity. The presentation went on to focus on work being undertaken by the Gear Innovation Technology Advisory Group which was broken down into work under Phase 1 and Phase 2.

During discussion, members asked questions about innovation on selection; getting information to consumers; and resources available to support the trialling of new equipment.

After consideration, it was **agreed** to note the information provided in the presentation.

The Chair concluded the item by thanking all three presenters for providing an interesting and informative presentation to the Group.

## **7. PRESENTATION: THE EUROPEAN MARITIME AND FISHERIES FUND (EMFF)**

The Team Manager – European Policy and Programmes gave a presentation to the Group on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. The presentation opened with some background information on the new European Programme. It was advised that the Programme would be running until 2020 and the aims of this were outlined to members. The UK Programme had been improved and was now open for applications. The presentation went on to look at Community Led Local Development Funds; the breadth of the membership of the partnership; eligible activities; and the application process. It was advised that a launch was scheduled to take place on 7 March, 2016.

During discussion, members asked questions about whether it was preferred to have one large project or many smaller projects; the likelihood of securing further funding if other areas fail to spend their allocations; the development of a Fish Processing Strategy; and whether any work was being undertaken on barriers to entering the industry.

Thereafter, it was **agreed**:

- (1) to note the information provided in the presentation,
- (2) that officers would circulate information to members on the launch event for the EMFF Programme,
- (3) that officers would ensure that the issue of the Fish Processing Strategy, and possible Blackdog site opportunity, was added to a future agenda of the Fisheries Local Action Group, and
- (4) that officers would provide regular updates to the Working Group

## **8. INTRODUCTION TO COMMERCIAL FISHING PROJECT UPDATE**

There had been circulated a report dated 18 February, 2016, by the Head of Economic Development which provided the Group with an update on the Commercial Fishing Project which had been introduced to provide local school leavers with a career interest in the fishing industry with a structured introduction to the industry. It was advised that there had been fifteen applicants for the twelve trainee places. The outcome of the project was that six of the twelve trainees had gone on to sign up to the Modern Apprenticeship and this greatly exceeded expectations. Given the considerable amount of investment in the six trainees to date, the project partners agreed that their interests in transitioning to the Modern

Apprenticeship should take precedence, so there were no plans to arrange a fresh intake of trainees in June 2016.

During discussion, members welcomed the success of the scheme. It was acknowledged that the focus should, for the time being, remain on those transitioning to the Modern Apprenticeship but the Group remained supportive of further intakes of trainees in future years.

After consideration, it was **agreed** to note contents of the report.

## 9. FISH4MARKET PROJECT UPDATE

There had been circulated a report dated 18 February, 2016, by the Head of Economic Development which provided the Group with an update on the Fish4Market Project. As well as reminding the Group about the background to the project, it was advised that there had been an independent review which had concluded that continuing support from Seafish, for a further three years, was fully justified. The review, however, recommended the formation of a new, slimmer project management group. A new web developer was in place and a full technical review of the platform had been undertaken and improvements made.

After consideration, the Working Group **agreed** to note the information provided in the report.

## 10. ORAL UPDATE ON NORTH EAST SCOTLAND SEAFOOD PROCESSING STRATEGY

The Industry Support Executive (Rural & Maritime) provided the Group with an update on the North East Scotland Seafood Strategy. It was advised that a study was launched in May which sought involvement with city processors and work had been ongoing for the last two and a half months. The pressure for city-based processors to relocate had diminished because of the downturn in the oil industry but remained an issue going forward. A number of meetings with industry representatives had taken place where it had been advised that support was available to them but it was advised that there had been very little take-up from the industry.

During discussion, members asked questions about the possibility of Aberdeen Harbour again becoming a mainstream fish landings port and the possibility of Blackdog providing a suitable site for City processors to relocate to.

After consideration, the Working Group **agreed**:

- (1) to note the information provided in the update, and
- (2) to invite a representative of Opportunity North East to attend a future meeting of the Working Group.

## 11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was suggested that, with a fish processing strategy already in existence, there should also be something for the catching sector and that the two strategies could be integrated. It was questioned whether there was demand for a strategy for the catching sector. Thereafter, it was **agreed** that Malcolm Morrison, Policy Officer with the Scottish Fishermen's Federation would be invited to a future meeting of the Working Group in order to pursue the matter further.

## 12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Group had been scheduled to take place on Friday 24 June. This date was no longer suitable and it was **agreed** that the next meeting would, instead, take place on Friday 17 June, 2016.