

FISHERIES WORKING GROUP

PETERHEAD PORT AUTHORITY, HARBOUR OFFICE, WEST PIER, PETERHEAD

FRIDAY, 17 JUNE, 2016

- Present:** Councillors C C Buchan (Chair), A Gardiner, J N Gifford (substitute for Councillor Roy) and F McRae (substitute for Councillor S W Smith).
- Apologies:** Councillors A S Buchan, I W Gray, P K Johnston and S W Smith.
- Officers:** Derek McDonald, Industry Support Executive (Rural and Maritime); Jamie Wilkinson, European Programmes Co-ordinator; and Alastair Nicol, Principal Committee Officer.

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

The Chair asked members if they had any interests to declare in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct. No interests were intimated.

2. PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

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

- (1) to 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; and
 - (c) foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- (2) where an Equality Impact Assessment was provided, to consider its contents and take those into account when reaching their decision.

3. MINUTE OF MEETING OF 26 FEBRUARY, 2016

The Minute of Meeting of 26 February, 2016, had been circulated and was **noted** as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

With reference to Item 5 of the minute, it was reported that members should have received time lapse footage from the Cairnbulg beach clean. It was noted that people in St Combs had recently carried out an informal beach clean and it was suggested that there could be a joined-up approach around the north east corner of the coast.

With reference to Item 10 of the minute, it was reported that work was continuing to develop the Opportunity North East (ONE) workstream on Food, Drink, Fisheries & Agriculture which was still at an early stage.

With reference to Item 11 of the minute, it was noted that Malcolm Morrison, Policy Officer with the Scottish Fishermen's Federation, had agreed to attend a future meeting of the Working Group.

5. PRESENTATION - PETERHEAD PORT AUTHORITY

John Wallace, Chief Executive, Peterhead Port Authority, gave a presentation to the Group on Peterhead Port Authority. The presentation began by showing the history of development of the harbour and the many uses of it which were being made today, and went on to illustrate the proposals for the future including the extension of the fish market and deepening of the inner harbour.

It was **agreed** to note the information provided in the presentation.

The Chair concluded the item by thanking Mr Wallace for providing an interesting and informative presentation to the Group and for the support he had given to the Council over the years in relation to fisheries and economic development. The Chair noted that Mr Wallace would shortly be retiring and wished him well in his forthcoming retirement.

6. PRESENTATION - NORTH EAST SCOTLAND FISHERIES LOCAL ACTION GROUP

The European Programmes Co-ordinator gave a presentation to the Group on the work of the North East Scotland Fisheries Local Action Group (NESFLAG) which had been launched at the end of March. The presentation opened by saying that NESFLAG was responsible for dealing with applications for Community Led Local Development Funds as part of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. Aberdeenshire Council was the managing agency for NESFLAG and the programme was open to receive applications. There had been some teething difficulties as NESFLAG was the first to launch, but the online application system was live and the next deadline for receipt of applications was the end of July. It was necessary to finalise all transactions within the programme allocation of £1.4M by the end of 2020 so the funding had to be committed by the end of 2018. Mr Wilkinson went on to say that the three priority areas were diversification of the fishing industry, adding value to the seafood supply chain, and job creation and training in fisheries areas. The eligible area extended round the NE coast from Sandend to St Cyrus and included Montrose and Arbroath in Angus. 25% of the funding had been allocated to Kincardine and Mearns but it was thought it would be challenging to spend that money. The presentation concluded by saying that it was planned to arrange a series of workshops in the main coastal communities to encourage ideas and it was hoped that applications would be received from businesses, other public sector organisations and the community.

During discussion, members asked questions about whether a coastal trail could be developed to attract tourists to the area, what was being done to contact Community Councils and local members, and whether work was still ongoing to attract fish processors from Aberdeen into Aberdeenshire.

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

7. BLUE CAREERS PROJECT

There had been circulated a report dated 9 June, 2016, by the Head of Economic Development which provided the Group with information on the Blue Careers project. The report explained that on 29 February, 2016, the EU Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME) had issued a Call for Proposals paper entitled Blue Careers in Europe under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). The paper described the importance of seas and coasts as key drivers of economic development in the EU and stated that around 5M people were employed in the 'blue economy' (including fisheries, marine transport and shipping, ship building and repair, offshore energy, aquaculture and biotechnology). The purpose of the call was to invite project groups to submit applications for financial assistance to help address apparent skills gaps in the sector and the need for

collaborative action to increase the number and diversity of trained and educated personnel to serve the future needs of the blue economy.

The report advised that the level of financial support available under the project call was €500k-€700k for a coordinated two year project, to which match-funding in the form of in-kind contributions would be required. The call came to the attention of the Fraserburgh Task Force (FTF) and its high relevance to the future challenges faced by the 'blue economy' (primarily fisheries) in NE Scotland was noted. Although the deadline for the application of 31 May, 2016, left little time for such a wide-ranging application to be properly researched and compiled, a meeting at NE Scotland College had been convened in late March 2016 for interested parties and the excellent buy-in from project partners had enabled a business case to be prepared in short order. Only seven bids from across the whole EU would be supported and the project team was under no illusions about the prospects of success. A decision was expected from EASME in October 2016, and successful applicants would be expected to initiate their projects in January 2017 and conclude no later than 31 December, 2018.

After consideration, the Working Group **agreed** to note the contents of the report.

8. PROGRESS UPDATE ON NORTH EAST SCOTLAND FISH PROCESSING STRATEGY

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of 26 February, 2016 (Item 10), there had been circulated a report dated 9 June, 2016, by the Head of Economic Development which provided the Group with an update on progress on the North East Scotland Fish Processing Strategy. The report stated that the strategy had been published on 11 May, 2015, and the aim of the study was to plan for and invest in growth in the fish processing sector in NE Scotland in the light of the new Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and in advance of the launch of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). The strategy and action plan had been well received by senior officers from the Scottish Government food and drink team, Marine Scotland, Scottish Enterprise and Seafood Scotland and the public launch had attracted considerable media interest.

The report commented that in July 2015 Young's had announced its intentions to downsize its seafood processing and added value operations in Fraserburgh following the loss of a major retail contract. The Scottish Government set up a Task Force in response. In the weeks that followed, the Task Force's work scope was broadened beyond the company in question to look at how the wider processing sector in NE Scotland could be supported, largely on the basis of the findings in the strategy. Appended to the report were details of progress on the action plan.

During discussion, members asked questions about the need to find a waste solution other than landfill by 2020 and whether fishermen were providing data about their catch.

After consideration, the Working Group **agreed** to note the contents of the report.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was **noted** that the next meeting of the Group was scheduled to take place on Friday, 23 September, 2016.

