

## **FISHERIES WORKING GROUP**

### **WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEEN**

**WEDNESDAY, 17<sup>th</sup> JANUARY, 2018**

**Present:** Councillors D Beagrie (substitute for Councillor A Kille); C C Buchan; R Cassie (substitute for Councillor A Allan); M Findlater, P K Johnston, A Killie, S W Smith and I Sutherland.

**Apologies:** Councillors A Allan, P Johnstone and A Kille.

**Officers:** Derek McDonald, Industry Support Executive (Rural and Maritime); Andrew Brown, Marine Scotland; Samantha Rawlins, 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 4<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER, 2017**

The Minute of Meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2017, had been circulated and was **agreed** as a correct record.

### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

Derek McDonald went through the action sheet from the last meeting to provide an update on progress in respect of each point. There were no further matters arising.

### **5. PRESENTATION ON FUTURE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT BY ANDREW BROWN, SENIOR POLICY OFFICER, MARINE SCOTLAND**

The Chair invited Mr Andrew Brown – Senior Policy Officer at Marine Scotland to deliver a presentation on Future Fisheries Management. Mr Brown gave an overview of the current arrangements governing sea fishing in Scotland under the Common Fisheries Policy, the changes that will be necessary following Brexit and how Scotland could best prosper after resuming control of its territorial waters. Mr Brown explained that Brexit provided a rare opportunity to shape a new fisheries policy at a fundamental level and that Marine Scotland would encourage anyone with an interest in fisheries management to engage with them.

Mr Brown set out the current regulatory framework, how a new framework might look including continuing restrictions and elements that we might wish to keep, the objectives, principles and vision for the future of Scottish Fisheries management and a range of management principles and how they may have conflicting objectives and principles. The process under which Scotland's National Marine Plan was developed was given as an example. Mr Brown then outlined an alternative approach working from the 'bottom up' by asking what stakeholders wanted from a Scottish Fisheries Policy and how those objectives might be achieved. Mr Brown then cited examples of fisheries policy from other countries. Mr Brown concluded his presentation by outlining his next steps in collecting views to inform a wider consultation on Future Fisheries Management in Scotland later in 2018.

During discussion Members discussed KIMO (the international maritime environment body for local authorities), the no-discards policy, fishery access arrangements and management of any new policy. There was a request for longer time-frames (eg ten years) and less complexity in any new structural funds programme for fisheries (EMFF successor), questions on quota, how to engage with difficult-to-reach stakeholders, the seafood processing sector, how to attract new entrants to the industry, and challenges arising from new species entering Scottish waters due to climate change.

The Chair thanked Mr Brown for a very informative and thought provoking presentation.

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

## **6. REPORT ON RESPONSES TO SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON PROPOSAL TO AMEND 'ECONOMIC LINK' LICENCE CONDITION**

There had been circulated a report dated 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2018 by the Head of Economic Development which provided Members with an overview of the responses to the Scottish Government proposal to amend the licence condition with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 in order to increase the volume of pelagic landings caught with UK quota. The report details that respondents from the pelagic catching sector, the Scottish Fishermen's Organisation, the Scottish Whitefish Producers Association, the Shetland Fishermen's Association and the Scottish Pelagic Fishermen's Association all opposed the proposed measures and would prefer that the three economic link options are retained. Respondents from outwith the pelagic catching sector, including the Scottish Pelagic Processors Association, were very largely in favour of the proposals. The report concluded by advising that the Fisheries Working Group consultation response had been submitted following input from members and that news is awaited from Marine Scotland on next steps.

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

## **7. BULLETIN REPORT ON SCOTTISH SEAFOOD CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE PROJECT**

There had been circulated a report dated 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2018 by the Head of Economic Development which provided Members with an update on the Seafood Centre of Excellence Project. Derek McDonald advised that following a wide consultation process with industry and various stakeholders, a project group comprising NESCOL, the Scottish Seafood Association, Scottish Enterprise, Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce, Fraserburgh Harbour, the council and others was taking forward an ambition to create a Scottish Seafood Centre of

Excellence to help benefit the sector as a whole – e.g. by fostering growth through improved productivity, product quality/accreditations and new product development in existing businesses, encouraging new enterprises and promoting seafood related careers. To test the business case for the creation of the proposed centre, Aberdeenshire Council had agreed to fund an independent economic assessment. A tender was prepared and posted on the Public Contracts Scotland website and SAC Consulting was appointed to investigate the viability of the project. The report findings have been recently finalised and the project group has since met to consider the findings and an action plan has been produced to progress the priority elements of the project, some of which are already underway.

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

### **8. VERBAL UPDATE ON NESFLAG**

Mr McDonald distributed a press release highlighting the positive outcomes that had been delivered by grants awarded by NESFLAG. It was reported that the NESFLAG programme was launched in March 2016 to deliver the community-led local development elements of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund 2014 – 2020. Due to the EU Referendum result, the deadline for grant commitment has been foreshortened to December 2018 and all projects must be completed and grant funds drawn down by December 2020.

The four projects approved in round 5 of the NESFLAG programme were a new pontoon facility at Sandhaven & Pitullie Harbour (delivering improved facilities for inshore fishing and leisure craft), the purchase of an innovative blasting system for a Peterhead-based ship painting business, the fitting-out costs of a new seafood restaurant in Fraserburgh which will serve locally-sourced seasonal produce and the establishment of a dedicated training centre to upskill the workforce – current and future - in the local seafood processing sector.

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

### **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr McDonald stated that the Faroese Parliament had recently enacted a new fisheries policy. In essence all marine resources are now the property of the Faroese people and are to be used for the national benefit. Fishing rights can no longer be traded privately. Mr Brown added that it was a radical policy, taking back fishing rights locally and that the policy was introduced after a 10 year notice period.

Mr McDonald also informed members that Ian Laidlaw, who had attended the previous meeting of FWG, had left his position at Chief Executive of Peterhead Port Authority. John Wallace, the previous incumbent, had returned as Interim Chief Executive until the appointment of a permanent replacement.

Members were advised that the new fish market in Peterhead was scheduled to open on 18 June. A suggestion was made to request a visit to the market at the next meeting of the group, and for the use of the Peterhead Port Authority boardroom for the post-visit meeting. Members were also asked for suggestions for the October meeting of the working group in Fraserburgh.

**Action point 1: Mr Andrew Brown's presentation to be circulated to all Members.**

**Action point 2: The link to the new Faroese Fisheries policy to be circulated to Members.**

**Action point 3: Cllr Sutherland to make enquiries regarding a visit by the Working Group to a processing plant and fishing vessel in Fraserburgh in October.**

#### **10. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The dates for the meetings in 2018 were confirmed as:

Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2018 at 10.00am in Council Chamber, Buchan House, Peterhead,

Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2018 at 10.00am at Fraserburgh Community and Sports Centre, Fraserburgh.