



## FISHERIES WORKING GROUP – 16 MAY 2018

### BULLETIN REPORT: SEAFOOD TRAINING CENTRE PROJECT

#### 1 Recommendation

1.1 It is recommended that the Group notes the content of this bulletin.

#### 2 Discussion

- 2.1 In November 2017, NE Scotland Fisheries Local Action Group (NESFLAG) approved the allocation of over £60,000 from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) for training equipment and to fund a part-time (2 days per week) training post for the duration of a two-year seafood industry Training Centre pilot project. The project is being led and match-funded by the Scottish Seafood Association (SSA) and will deliver a range of specialised courses certified to Royal Environment Health Institute for Scotland (REHIS) and Seafish standards, including advanced food hygiene, sensory assessment and fish smoking training to upskill the existing workforce, while new entrants to industry will be provided with a structured induction programme covering health and safety, basic knife skills and food hygiene.
- 2.2 A key component of the project will be getting out into wider community and into schools, colleges and the hospitality sector to promote seafood industry-related careers. This project aligns closely with Scottish Government's Ambition 2030 strategy which aims to double the value of the Scottish food and drink sector to £30 billion by 2030.
- 2.3 Terms were agreed in March 2018 with Michael Sim, former Managing Director of Young's Seafood in Fraserburgh to deliver technical advice and training to local seafood companies under the project. Mr Sim, who takes up his new role in June 2018, has 30 years' experience in delivering food-related training and accreditation to the highest level (BRC) and his appointment is a very significant development. The project has recently attracted further financial support from Seafish (via the Scottish Seafood Training Network), Scottish Government, Aberdeenshire Council and funding from private industry sources to extend its reach.
- 2.4 SSA sees the project as an important stepping stone for the wider processing sector - to prepare for future growth opportunities and challenges arising from improving fish stocks, Brexit, demography and competition from overseas. By improving skills and accreditation standards and making the industry more attractive as a career of choice, there is a clear opportunity to secure a larger share of seafood value-add from local landings.
- 2.5 Training will be delivered for the most part in Peterhead and in Fraserburgh. However much of the training kit is portable and so it can be transported to wherever training needs lie. The hope is that the project can develop sufficient momentum beyond the term of the two pilot to become self-sustaining.

2.6 As part of the project, a derogation was obtained from the Animal and Plant Health Authority (APHA) to allow fish 'discards' landed at NE ports to be used for training purposes. Discards are not allowed to enter the human food chain and are generally collected at ports for onward transport to be converted into fishmeal. The derogation allows discards to be removed from the fishmeal supply chain, weighed, used for training purposes and then returned (same weight) to the fishmeal supply chain - thereby taking significant raw material costs out of the equation and improving the affordability and likely uptake of training.

2.7 Key outputs of the project are as follows:

- 100 seafood companies to be assisted over the 2 years of the pilot
- 400 trainees (around 100 of which are expected to be new entrants)
- 2000 hours of training delivered

Progress updates will be provided to members

### **3 Scheme of Governance**

Fisheries Working Group is able to consider this item in terms of its remit to provide a focus to enable issues and concerns across the wider fisheries sector in Aberdeenshire to be addressed.

### **4 Implications and Risk**

- 4.1 There are no equality impact implications arising from this report
- 4.2 There are no staffing and financial implications for the council arising from this report.
- 4.3 No risks arising from this report have been identified for the council at Corporate Level
- 4.4 No issues have been identified in relation to the Town Centre First Principle

Belinda Miller  
Head of Economic Development

Report prepared by Derek McDonald, Industry Support Executive (Rural & Maritime)  
4<sup>th</sup> May, 2018