



BULLETIN: FISHERIES WORKING GROUP – 29 JANUARY 2020

REVIEW OF FISHERIES WORKING GROUP

1 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

1.1 Consider future options for Fisheries Working Group (FWG)

2 Background / Discussion

2.1 A report presented to FWG on 15 May 2019 advised of competing demands reducing the capacity of Committee Services officers to support Fisheries Working Group and other Member Officer Working Groups, most notably Rural Affairs Working Group (RAWG), creating additional work for organising officers from Economic Development. Aberdeenshire Council also hosts NE Scotland Fisheries Development Partnership (NESFDP) and NE Scotland Agriculture Advisory Group (NESAAG). Each comprise representatives from outside organisations and neighbouring councils and both groups have been subject to periodic review. No change is proposed to how NESFDP and NESAAG operate or to the level of Committee Officer support provided.

2.2 Reviews of FWG and RAWG are now underway. It is anticipated a report on the future arrangements for FWG and RAWG will be presented to Infrastructure Services Committee after due consideration. The range of options originally proposed for FWG include:

- a) To integrate FWG into NESFDP
- b) To reduce the frequency of FWG meetings
- c) Make alternative proposals
- d) No change

FWG Members declared their preference at the FWG meetings on 15 May and on 11 September 2019 for the status quo to prevail, noting in particular that NESFDP and FWG are very different bodies and that the council's singular view on fisheries related policy and other matters would be greatly diluted if FWG were to be subsumed into NESFDP. This outcome would require additional resources to be found.

2.3 The intention is for the review of FWG and RAWG to proceed broadly in parallel and whilst FWG has already met twice in May and September 2019 to discuss the various options, the RAWG meeting on 19 September did not proceed. A review report was tabled on 13 November at RAWG but the meeting on 13 November went ahead in the absence of the Chair (Provost) who was representing the Council at an event in London. RAWG members agreed to defer detailed discussions the next meeting of the Group.

- 2.4 The Industry Support Executive (Rural & Maritime) from Economic Development will continue to pick up the extra workload associated with FWG and RAWG meetings until the review has been completed, but this will reduce officer time available to carry out project work and industry support activity at what is an important time for both the fisheries and rural economy sectors.
- 2.5 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

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

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial		x	
Staffing	x		
Equalities		x	
Fairer Scotland Duty		x	
Town Centre First		x	
Sustainability		x	
Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing		x	

- 4.1 There are short-term staffing implications while the review is taking place. The time available to the Industry Support Executive (Rural & Maritime) to carry out policy and project work will be reduced.

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Report by Derek McDonald, Industry Support Executive (Rural & Maritime)
21 January 2020