

NE SCOTLAND FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP: 11 NOVEMBER 2022

REPORT: NESFDP TERMS OF REFERENCE

1 Executive Summary/Recommendations

- 1.1** The reason for this report is to set out the background to a recently conducted review of fisheries related working groups within Aberdeenshire Council, the review process and to allow members to express a view on revised Terms of Reference proposed for NESFDP.

2 NESFDP is recommended to

- 2.1 Note the outcome of the review of the roles and remits of NESFDP and Fisheries Working Group (FWG);**
- 2.2 Approve the revised Terms of Reference for NESFDP proposed in Appendix 1**

3 Discussion

- 3.1** Following the local council elections on 5 May 2022, the first meeting of Aberdeenshire Council Infrastructure Services Committee (ISC) under the new administration took place on 8 June 2022. The Committee agreed not to appoint Members at that time to NESFDP and to FWG under the agenda item 22 – Nominations to Sub-Committees and Working Groups (report titled: *Appointment of Infrastructure Services Sub-Committees, Working Groups and Inter-Authority Working Groups*). ISC instead instructed the Head of Planning and Economy to undertake a review of the roles and remits of NESFDP and FWG and report back to the Committee.
- 3.2** The consequent report presented to ISC on 6 October 2022 set out NESFDP's pre-existing Terms of Reference which had been unchanged since 2001:
- Provide a forum where industry, public sector and all other relevant parties can meet to discuss areas of concern and share best practice.
 - Sustain the socio-economies of fishing dependent communities and to assist the industry to access directly EU structural funds to ensure maximum benefit.
 - Identify and promote, with the industry, opportunities for further sustainable development within the fishing industry and fishing dependent communities.
 - Support the fishing industry in collective and unified representation.
 - Work within the EU framework to achieve economic and bio-sustainable fishing policies.
 - Develop a framework for trans-national co-operation between fishing dependent areas.

- 3.3 The report explained that FWG, which comprises Aberdeenshire Council Elected Members only, was established in 1999 to advise the Council on issues affecting the industry and fishing dependent communities and concluded: ‘The above analysis of the history and remits of both NESFDP and FWG demonstrates that there is clear duplication in their purpose’.
- 3.4 The report presented to ISC on 6 October 2022 went on to propose updated Terms of Reference for NESFDP subject to the approval of the Partnership.
- 3.5 ISC agreed on 6 October to retain NESFDP as an inter-authority partnership, disband FWG and endorse the revised Terms of Reference – subject to approval by NESFDP at its next meeting. Five elected members from Aberdeenshire Council were then appointed by ISC to NESFDP on a politically proportionate basis.
- 3.6 NESFDP members are invited to consider and approve the revised Terms of Reference attached as **Appendix 1**.

4 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

- 4.1 This report is relevant to all of the following Council priorities:

| Pillar | Priority |
|-----------------|--|
| Our People | Education Health & Wellbeing |
| Our Environment | Infrastructure Resilient Communities |
| Our Economy | Economy & Enterprise Estate Modernisation |

- 4.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed.

| Subject | Yes | No | N/A |
|--|-----|----|-----|
| Financial | | | X |
| Staffing | | | X |
| Equalities and Fairer Duty Scotland | | | X |
| Children and Young People’s Rights and Wellbeing | | | X |
| Climate Change and Sustainability | | | X |
| Health and Wellbeing | | | X |
| Town Centre First | | | X |

5 Scheme of Governance

- 5.1 NE Scotland Fisheries Development Partnership is able to consider this item in terms of its remit to provide a NE Scotland focus to enable issues and concerns across the fisheries and related sectors to be addressed. This includes strengthening economic development links between fisheries science, catching and processing sectors and the wider seafood industry, contributing to regional and local priorities for the fisheries sector, improving links between marine environment and biodiversity and contributing to policy development and consultations.

Alan Wood, Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services

Report prepared by Derek McDonald, Industry Support Executive (Rural & Maritime) 25 October 2022

Appendix 1

Revised Terms of Reference for NESFDP (2022)

Fisheries and seafood have been key sectors in NE Scotland for many years and are vital to the local economy. Established in the 1990s, NESFDP is a cross party, cross-sectoral group hosted by Aberdeenshire Council which meets three times per annum and seeks to provide a communication channel between the wider industry and its political representatives at all levels. Members include fishing and seafood industry representatives, support bodies, scientific and environmental organisations and elected members from local authorities, Holyrood and Westminster

- Promote sustainable economic development within the fishing and seafood industries for the benefit of fisheries-dependent communities and the marine environment.
- Lobby government and other bodies on policy and structural fund issues in support of the collective interests of the wider fisheries and seafood supply chain in NE Scotland.
- Promote a deeper understanding of the science underpinning fishing opportunities.
- Coordinate efforts to improve the competitiveness of fisheries and seafood sectors through innovation, value-add and marketing.
- Identify and address knowledge gaps to optimise evidence-based decision-making impinging upon fisheries and seafood sectors.
- Provide a forum where industry, the public sector and all other relevant parties can meet to discuss matters of concern and share best practice.