

News release

6 November 2012

Seafish Chairman chooses to retire after steering the organisation through stormy waters

John S. Whitehead, OBE, the Chairman of the Board of Seafish is to retire from the role after 10 years when his current term of appointment expires at the end of December. John joined Seafish in 2002 as Deputy Chair of the Board becoming Chairman in June 2010. In that time he has helped successfully negotiate Seafish through its most difficult period of operation after a challenge to its status was taken all the way to the Supreme Court in 2010.

Following the successful resolution of the legal case John successfully steered Seafish through a challenging decade for the fishing industry. Fluctuations in raw material prices combined with inadequate quotas means many fleets have faced an economically challenging period.

In addition John has led Seafish through a consultation with industry, the development of a new corporate plan, and the reorganisation of its Governance structure including the appointment of a new Board which is supported by three advisory panels directly appointed from the seafood industry. He therefore leaves Seafish at a time when the organisation is looking forward to achieving success with the knowledge that it has the full support of industry behind it.

John, originally from Cumbria has spent his whole working life in Fife in the food industry, latterly as Managing Director of Dundee based food manufacturer Top Hat Holdings Limited. He has also served on the boards of other public bodies including the levy funded Meat & Livestock Commission and Food from Britain. He is also currently Chairman of the Certification Council of Scottish Food Quality Certification, a Trustee of the Food and Drink Exporters Association and has a number of non-executive roles in the food industry.

Speaking of his time at Seafish, John Whitehead said: "Keeping the momentum of the organisation going through a court case that stretched over nearly two years was one of the biggest challenges I have ever faced. I will always feel extremely proud that we not only succeeded in maintaining a service during that difficult time, but we were also able

to ensure that a healthy organisation came out the other side. Since then we have worked extremely hard to create an organisation that industry wants. I firmly believe the systems, structures and work plans we have in place now mean Seafish is in the strongest position that I have ever known it to be and look forward to watching the organisation deliver on its commitment to provide a real benefit to the seafood industry. Our new Corporate Plan will be going to Fisheries Ministers within the next few days."

Dr Paul Williams, Chief Executive of Seafish said: "Seafish would not be in the positive position it is today without John and we owe him a debt of gratitude for the way he stood by and supported the organisation throughout its darkest time. It stands as testament to his abilities as a Chair and businessman that Seafish now finds itself better aligned with the industry it serves than ever before and that we are about to embark on an ambitious and exciting programme of work which will deliver real value back to levy payers. His chairmanship, guidance and diplomacy will be sadly missed and we wish him well with his next endeavours."

John will officially step down on 31 December 2012 and intends to remain active within the food industry and beyond.

ENDS

For further information on this release, or to arrange interviews with key individuals contact:

Dani Sewell
Seafish press office
T: 01472 252 321
E: d_sewell@seafish.co.uk

or

Jennifer Butler or Stacey Blevins
Weber Shandwick
T: 0131 556 6649 / 07770 886 937 / 07909 891 498
E: seafishWS@webershandwick.com

Background information:

Seafish was founded in 1981 by an Act of Parliament and aims to support all sectors of the seafood industry for a sustainable, profitable future. It is the only pan-industry body offering services to all parts of the industry, from the start of the supply chain at catching and aquaculture; through processing, importers, exporters and distributors of seafood right through to restaurants and retailers.

Seafish is funded by a levy on the first sale of seafood landed in the UK. Its services are intended to support and improve the environmental sustainability, efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the industry, as well as promoting sustainably-sourced seafood. These

services include technical research and development, responsible sourcing initiatives, economic consulting, market research, industry accreditation, safety training for fishermen and legislative advice.

www.seafish.org