

# Seafish Wales Advisory Committee

MINUTES OF THE 16<sup>th</sup> MEETING

TUE 21 JULY 2020 | 14:00-15:30 | ZOOM



## Attendees

Jon Parker (JP)(Chair)	Committee Chair
Jim Evans (JE)	Welsh Fishermen's Association
Colin Charman (CC)	Natural Resources Wales
John Penaluna (JPen)	Penaluna's Famous Fish & Chips
Mike Dowell (MD)	Welsh Government – Marine & Fisheries
Paul Howes (PH)	CSAR, Swansea University
Sian Davies (SD)	Menter a Busnes
Emma Wootton (EW)	Seafish Regional Manager – Wales
Holly Whiteley (HW)	Seafish Regional Manager – Wales
Hazel Curtis (HC)	Seafish Director of Corporate Relations
Jane Devereux (JD)	Welsh Fishing Safety Project Officer
Phillip Quirie (PQ)(Minutes)	Project Co-ordinator & Administrator

### 1. Welcome and apologies

JP welcomed everyone to the call, and EW tendered apologies on behalf of Nick O'Sullivan (WMFAG), Bethan Jones (WG), Noemi Donigiewicz (WG).

### 2. Minutes and actions from previous meeting

JP referred to the minutes from the previous meeting and asked for any comments or amendments page-by-page. JE asked that '12-mile zone' be changed to 'Welsh zone' in the third paragraph of page 3.

**ACTION 01: Seafish to amend page 3 of the minutes accordingly, and upload to the SWAC section of the Seafish website.**

EW provided an update on the actions from the previous meeting:

Action Summary from 22 October 2019	Assigned to	Timeframe
01: Seafish to amend page 2 of the minutes accordingly, and upload to the SWAC section of the Seafish website.	Seafish	Complete
02: Seafish to ensure sufficient channels of communication are in place to signpost relevant Seafish expertise on Fridays.	Seafish	Complete
03: Seafish to produce a proposal to review and revise the current Wales Seafood Strategy.	Seafish	For discussion on Paper 3
04: Any SWAC members yet to submit a Chair nomination to do so by email to Aoife Martin no later than 7 November 2019.	ALL	Complete
05: Seafish to circulate next meeting date once confirmed.	Seafish	Complete

### 3. Seafish Executive update

HC gave a presentation (Attachment: *01 SWAC Exec Update 210720*), outlining a wide variety of Seafish activity over the past six months. The primary focus is COVID-19 response and the different avenues of support delivered to the seafood community around the UK, as well as the DEFRA-sponsored 'Sea For Yourself' consumption campaign.

JE asked if Seafish have measured the impact of direct selling on sales during the COVID-19 pandemic, and whether any subsequent data exists that could be learned from. HC explained that no mechanism currently exists

to collect figures or data on direct sales, however there exists strong anecdotal narrative and examples demonstrating the positive impact direct selling had on UK seafood consumption. HC confirmed these examples and stories will form part of the thinking in the Love Seafood consumption strategy.

JP expressed concern regarding the sustainability of direct selling practices, and felt it's important to understand how much direct selling is taking place and how much space there is in that market for Welsh product. MD referred to the Seafish map of direct sellers and online vendors, and suggested it'd be useful to know which of the vendors listed were hitherto selling directly to consumers – this would provide a split of how many new entrants there are to direct selling and provide a measure of impact.

#### 4. Seafish in Wales update on COVID-19 support

EW presented PowerPoint slides (Attachment: *02 SWAC COVID-19 update*), summarising a range of work carried out by Seafish in Wales during the coronavirus pandemic. EW ended by providing two useful links:

Seafish COVID-19 updates for the seafood industry (updated regularly):

<https://www.seafish.org/article/coronavirus-updates-for-the-seafood-industry>

Sign-up for the Seafish Wales mailing list [here](#).

JE asked if there's any intention to publish the intelligence and data gathered during peak COVID-19 by Seafish, and which was provided to Welsh Government and DEFRA. EW explained that two summary reports had been produced, but they may require sign-off from DEFRA and Welsh Government prior to sharing with JE, but will ask the question and report back.

**ACTION 02: Seafish to establish ownership and sharing of data provided by Seafish to DEFRA and Welsh Government, and share if permitted.**

MD asked if there are metrics in place to capture uptake on key worker certificates and online training courses. HC confirmed this data will exist and can be drilled down to a Welsh level.

**ACTION 03: Seafish to produce metrics capturing Welsh industry uptake on key worker certificates and online training courses since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

#### 5. SWAC membership

JP referred to Paper 2 on membership of the committee, and explained the need for a consistent and representative membership of the group. A committee core is in place, but JP continued by saying a more representative cross-section of members will lead to more effective scrutiny and direction of Seafish activity in Wales. JP then asked for any suggestions or comments.

PH said Mowi have recently taken over Ocean Matters in North Wales, and suggested a representative from Mowi on the committee may be useful. In terms of aquaculture diversification, PH went on to recommend a company called 360 Aquaculture in Swansea. Thirdly, PH also felt having a representative from seaweed aquaculture would be useful, and suggested Owen Haines of the South Wales Seafood Cluster.

A discussion took place about the impact of Wales' geography on meeting attendance. HC asked if attendance and participation is likely to improve and increase if all future meetings took place virtually on Zoom, even in a post-lockdown environment, which was received positively by the committee. PH suggested a compromise of

one annual face-to-face meeting with an expansive agenda and guest speakers, with smaller-scale virtual meetings in the interim.

## 6. Wales Seafood Strategy

JP referred to Paper 3 on the Wales Seafood Strategy, and summarised its close link with SWAC. The strategy requires evaluation (and potentially updating) in order to address COVID-19 and the EU exit, as well as align with other relevant (existing and emerging) Welsh strategies and plans.

MD agreed the strategy needs to be reviewed, but then asked whether a review is sufficient – should the strategy be started afresh? The strategy was devised in October 2016 and the world has changed dramatically since then, both domestically and internationally.

JE supported the idea of restarting the strategy, and also asked what the other Seafish regional advisory committees have in place as their equivalent strategy: how does the Welsh strategy compare in terms of ambition and delivery thus far? HC explained that England and Scotland both have government-led food strategies (Seafood 2040 and Ambition 2030 respectively). Seafish do not lead or deliver on these strategies, but provide support wherever possible. HC suggested effective SWAC recruitment will help shape and deliver a new strategy for seafood in Wales.

JE made the point that effective fisheries policy and stock management should be in place before a consumption strategy is developed, because this will affect what can and can't be achieved or delivered.

It is agreed by all that a separate workshop should be arranged to discuss the Welsh Seafood Strategy in greater detail.

**ACTION 04: Seafish to circulate doodle poll to find a suitable date for a Wales Seafood Strategy workshop discussion.**

## 7. Future focus for Seafish in Wales

EW referred to Paper 4, explaining the need for Seafish to be agile and responsive in a COVID-19 and EU-exit landscape and outlining the five key challenges under which Seafish activity is categorised:

**Challenge 1:** A changing political, economic, and regulatory landscape (esp. COVID-19 and EU-exit).

**Challenge 2:** Stagnant consumer demand and strong competition from other protein foods.

**Challenge 3:** Competing with other food production sectors for access to a suitably skilled workforce, while addressing issues around workplace safety.

**Challenge 4:** Sourcing sustainable seafood in an increasingly competitive global market, alongside continued public concern over practices that compromise human welfare and the environment.

**Challenge 5:** Accessing the data, information, and knowledge that will ensure the sector is equipped to understand and respond innovatively to a changing environment.

EW then asked the group for any direction on Seafish work in Wales going forward.

MD said challenges 1,2, and 5 are key challenge areas and feels focus on these areas will be beneficial. JE agreed and asked if anything falling out-with the challenges can be proposed; EW confirmed any ideas are welcome and will be considered.

PH backed the importance of challenges 1,2, and 5, but also felt challenge 4 deserves some further consideration and could feed in to Welsh brand identification and food security.

JPen felt challenges 2,3, and 4 can be addressed on a local level by the food service and fish and chips sector.

## 8. Any other business and date of next meeting

JE noted the timeframe between now and the exit from the EU is only a matter of months. UK Government initiated a fish export service and released details of other Brexit preparation measures being taken, and JE asked what Welsh Government have been doing and whether it aligns with UK Government. MD said he'd explore the current situation and report back to JE directly. HC took the opportunity to sign-post everyone to the regularly updated [guide to the UK exit from the EU](#).

JE asked if Seafish have considered developing a simplified and punchy "How To" guide to seafood exporting, simplifying the legislation to a format easily understood, for example animated graphics or videos. HC confirmed this has been considered, but the process of exporting is neither simple nor punchy enough to capture effectively via simplified videos or graphics.

No other business was received. JP asked the secretariat to circulate potential dates for the next SWAC meeting in late autumn via a doodle poll, and also asked that an interim workshop be arranged to discuss in detail the Wales Seafood Strategy.

**ACTION 05: Seafish to circulate doodle poll to find a suitable date for the next SWAC meeting in late Autumn.**

Action Summary	Assigned to	Timeframe
01: Seafish to amend page 3 of the minutes accordingly, and upload to the SWAC section of the Seafish website.	PQ	Next meeting
02: Seafish to establish ownership and sharing of economic data provided by Seafish to DEFRA and Welsh Government, and share if permitted.	EW/MD	Next meeting
03: Seafish to produce metrics capturing Welsh industry uptake on key worker certificates and online training courses since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.	EW/HW	Next meeting
04: Seafish to circulate doodle poll to find a suitable date for a Wales Seafood Strategy workshop discussion.	PQ	When applicable
05: Seafish to circulate doodle poll to find a suitable date for the next SWAC meeting in late Autumn.	PQ	When applicable