

SEA FISH INDUSTRY AUTHORITY

Minutes of the eighth meeting of the Seafish Domestic and Export Sector Panel

Held at The Wesley Hotel, 81-103 Euston Street, London on Monday 19 October 2015

Present:

John Goodlad (JG)	Chair
Martyn Boyers (MB)	British Ports Association
Robert Duthie (RD)	Exporters
Jim Evans (JE)	Welsh interests
David Jarrad (DJ)	Shellfish Association of Great Britain
Martin Leyland (ML)	Shetland interests
Kevin McDonnell (KM)	Scottish Association of Fish Producer Organisations
Malcolm Morrison (MM)	Scottish Fishermen’s Federation
Jim Portus (JPo)	UK Association of Fish Producer Organisations
Dale Rodmell (DR)	National Federation of Fishermen’s Organisations
John Rooney (JR)	Northern Ireland interests
Clare Dodgson (CD)	Seafish, Board Member (observer)
Jonathan Shepherd (JS)	Seafish, Board Member (observer)
Chris Lamb (CL)	Supply Chain Sector Panel Chair (observer)
Janice Anderson (JA)	Seafish, Business Services Director
Mel Groundsell (MG)	Seafish, Corporate Relations Director
Tom Pickerell (TP)	Seafish, Technical Director
Simon Potten (SP)	Seafish, Panel Secretariat
Hazel Curtis (HC)	Seafish, Chief Economist (part)

Apologies:

Chris Anderson (CA)	Processors
Jerry Percy (JPe)	Small Boat / Inshore

1. Introduction – new members

1.1 JG welcomed JR and KM to the Panel; SP advised that John Cox had resigned from the Panel following his departure from the Scottish Seafood Association; Seafish was waiting to hear from the Association who would replace John as their representative on the Panel.

1.2 JPo observed that the Seafish Sector Panels Terms of Reference (ToR) state that, “Each Panel will review submissions of prospective membership, either by email or at panel meetings where appropriate” and objected that this process had not been

followed regarding the appointment of JPe to represent small boat/inshore fishermen. JG explained that this was an established (Seafish-appointed) position on the Panel that had been openly advertised. Three applications had been received and all three had been interviewed by an interview panel comprising JG, TP and SP; all agreed that JPe had interviewed best. The wording in the ToR was not intended to imply that members would be involved in the selection process for existing Seafish-appointed positions on the Panel.

ACTION 8.1: Seafish to amend the wording of its Terms of Reference to clarify Panel members' involvement in membership decisions.

1.3 JG informed members that following discussion at the Seafish Board, it had been suggested that this Panel would benefit from having an active skipper attending and asked members for their views. MM advised that his deputy in representing the Scottish Fishermen's Federation (David Milne) is an active fisherman (and also Chair of the Scottish White Fish Producers' Association). Members questioned whether many active skippers would be available/willing to attend meetings and whether one skipper's input from one particular region/fishery would be that beneficial. JPo suggested inviting different skippers from different regions/fisheries to attend future meetings on a rotational basis.

ACTION 8.2: Seafish to invite nominations from members for an active fisherman to invite to the next Panel meeting.

2. Minutes of the last meeting (25 March 2015)

2.1 Accepted as a true record with the removal of the words "(deputising for Ian Gatt)" against Malcolm Morrison's entry in the list of attendees.

2.2 Regarding Para 3.11 JA confirmed that restrictions on Seafish recruiting new staff had been lifted.

2.3 Regarding Paras 4.2 and 6.8 ML asked whether there would be any discussion regarding delivery of the last Corporate Plan 2012-2015. MG advised that this had not been included on the agenda for discussion as the completed Delivery Report had already been issued to Panel members earlier in the year; a further communication would be sent to members when the fully audited accounts were available. JA also advised that there had been less underspend at the end of the last Corporate Plan than had been feared.

2.4 Regarding Para 8.5 JPo informed members that recent (Australian) research indicated that the extent/impact of fishing on the seabed was far less than had been envisaged (see link below).

http://blog.through-the-gaps.co.uk/2015/10/australian-scientists-claim-100-years.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+ThroughTheGaps-NewlynFishingNews+%28Through+the+gaps%21+-+Newlyn+Fishing+News%29

2.5 JE also advised members of recent reports published by the University of Bangor evidencing that the impact of scallop dredging in Cardigan Bay was less than had been thought (see links below).

<http://fisheries-conservation.bangor.ac.uk/wales/documents/59.pdf>

<http://fisheries-conservation.bangor.ac.uk/wales/documents/60.pdf>

<http://fisheries-conservation.bangor.ac.uk/wales/documents/61.pdf>

2.6 JG advised members on the work of CFood (<http://cfooduw.org/>) in countering scare stories regarding the impact of fishing.

3. Panel Administration

3.1 MG introduced the revised Terms of Reference and advised that the other two Sector Panels had requested the inclusion of a paragraph on potential conflicts of interest and suggested the following wording (which was accepted by members):

'Members should inform Panel Secretariat of any conflict of interest with regard to their professional life and their Seafish responsibilities, and should offer to withdraw from any discussions where they may be seen to have the opportunity of personal or corporate financial gain.'

3.2 MG also advised that the other two Panels had agreed to increase the maximum size of each Panel to 14 members (to accommodate this Panel) and asked that the allowance for London hotels be increased from £140 to £175 per night. Members agreed.

3.3 MG noted that the ToR would also need to be amended as per Action 8.1.

ACTION 8.3: Seafish to update Terms of Reference and email to members.

4. Seafish Update

4.1 JA advised on progress recruiting a replacement CEO; Paul Williams steps down at the end of October 2015 and interviews for his replacement will take place in early November 2015. JA will step up as Acting Senior Executive during the interim period.

4.2 Seafish Chair (Elaine Hayes) is stepping down at the end of December having come to the end of her 3-year term of office; DEFRA will handle the recruitment of a

replacement. Deputy Chair (Brian Young) will cover in the event of any gap between Elaine's departure and the appointment of her replacement.

4.3 The requirement for all four Ministers to sign off these appointments could extend the timescale.

4.4 Negotiations have been taking place between Scottish Government and Westminster regarding the Scotland Bill and the recommendations from the Smith Commission regarding the devolution of levy raising powers for food and drink. Seafish is not involved in those discussions.

4.5 MM commented on the recent press release from Richard Lochhead criticising Seafish and its use of levy regarding the Fish & Chip Shop of the Year Awards. <http://news.scotland.gov.uk/News/Scottish-levy-money-used-to-promote-Norwegian-fish-1e43.aspx> TP commented that the timing of this had been unfortunate (i.e., during Seafood Week) as it had diverted attention and Comms resources away from promoting seafood and its consumption. MG advised that Seafish's response was on the web-site here: <http://www.seafish.org/about-seafish/news-and-events/news/national-fish-and-chip-awards---a-uk-wide-success>

4.6 TP advised that following Mike Kaiser stepping down from the Seafish Board last year, the Board had directed Seafish to set up a Science Advisory Group. Mike Kaiser has been appointed to Chair this Group, details of which are on the Seafish web-site here: <http://www.seafish.org/about-seafish/our-structure/science-advisory-group-sag-> The first meeting of the Group will take place on the 12th November 2015. JPo expressed concern over the membership of the Group; TP explained the rationale had been to recruit scientists with a wide range of expertise and opinions.

4.7 TP advised that the Seafish Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) had been launched (with a £300k budget in Year 1) to commission work for the benefit of the industry. Seafish received 62 applications with costs totalling approximately £3m. The initial sift reduced this number by half; the remainder were asked to submit detailed applications. Sixteen have been approved and contracts are currently being drawn up to initiate the projects. Details are on the Seafish web-site: (http://www.seafish.org/media/1459189/sif_1_websummary_v2.pdf). There is likely to be one further call for applications in summer 2016.

4.8 MG updated members on the work Seafish is doing to support DEFRA by facilitating a consultation to understand industry views around the opportunities presented by EMFF and to convene a high level Industry Task Force, which will use the feedback from industry to develop an overarching strategy for industry in England. Assenti Research (working with three sector specialists) has been appointed to undertake the consultation to be completed by the end of October 2015. JE advised that

he was somewhat surprised by this piece of work, given that consultation had already taken place to develop the EMFF Operational Plan. JE advised that there was an EMFF Programme Monitoring Committee in mid-November 2015. MG advised that DEFRA and the Devolved Administrations had agreed to open EMFF in mid-January 2016 (dependent upon the UK's Operational Plan being signed off by the European Commission before end-December 2015). DJ expressed concern at the short timescale for this work and worried that Seafish and the Task Force might get blamed for any further delay in EMFF delivery. TP clarified that the Task Force's role was to prioritise investment areas in England (within the scope of the Operational Plan). ML advised that Marine Scotland was also seeking input from stakeholders on priorities for EMFF spend in Scotland. DR expressed concern that, if MMO's focus was on fewer bigger projects under EMFF, small scale businesses would not be able to access support.

4.9 MB commented that he thought it was inevitable that Seafish would eventually be split up as a consequence of devolution and recommended that work should be undertaken as a matter of urgency to prepare for that eventuality; CD advised that whilst some contingency planning could (and is) being undertaken, but that Seafish cannot pre-empt any constitutional decisions.

4.10 MG advised members that Seafood Week (9-16 October 2015) had successfully engaged industry and thanked members for their support. MG agreed to report back to members on the evidence being gathered to determine what impact it has had on consumption.

ACTION 8.4: Seafish to share Seafood Week evaluation results with members.

5. CP1518 Delivery Report

5.1 TP introduced the progress report in the pack and went through the dashboards for each workstream.

5.2 DR commented that it was unfortunate that the report only went up to end of June 2015 and didn't include more recent progress. He suggested that future meetings be scheduled to ensure that the latest information is seen and considered at the earliest opportunity. JG suggested that dashboard reports be circulated to Sector Panel members as soon as they are signed off by the Seafish Board. Members agreed.

ACTION 8.5: Seafish to circulate dashboard progress reports as soon as available and ensure that papers are circulated in digital format as well as paper.

5.3 ML complimented Seafish on the presentation of this information and advised that he had a number of specific questions from Shetland stakeholders which he would put to the Seafish Exec outside of the meeting.

5.4 JE referred to Terms of Reference and the role of Panel members with regard to monitoring progress against budget and questioned how this manifested itself.

5.5 JA advised that internal procedures were now in place to prevent any underspend in future. Unless justifiable explanation for any underspend is given, funds will be reallocated.

5.6 MM pointed out that the Enquiry Log figures for Reputation and Consumption workstreams were duplicated.

5.7 MB expressed concern at the comment (on the International & Regions workstream dashboard's financial summary) regarding the overspend on the Scotland work programme and the need for additional levy to cover the gap between EFF and EMFF. JPo added that the overspend must be even worse now, given that EMFF is still not open. At the request of ML, TP clarified the difference between Seafood Scotland and Seafish Scotland.

5.8 TP advised that the current round of Sector Panel meetings was taking place at a time when it was too early to evaluate the impact of initial progress with delivery of CP1518 and too early to start work on development of the next Corporate Plan, hence Seafish's desire to give members an in-depth presentation on workstreams/programmes/projects of their choosing. Economics had been selected for this meeting, but at the next meeting it was hoped that two presentations could be given.

ACTION 8.6: Members to provide Seafish with ideas/requests for presentations at next meeting.

6. Workstream in Focus - Economics

6.1 JG introduced HC and mentioned how this latest work built on the good work of the Discards Action Group and that the Landings Obligation will have a huge impact for the industry.

6.2 HC started by introducing her team and advised that a new Senior Economist had been appointed and would start work shortly. HC provided an overview of her team's three work programmes (Data Collection, Analysis & Evidence and Advice) and advised that publications (like Quay Issues) helped bring the data and statistical analysis alive.

6.3 HC explained that her team became involved in the discussions around the Landings Obligation in order to inform the debate. The analysis had focused on choke stocks (as a limiting factor); all six fleet segments are expected to experience these. Advice has been focused on policy responses.

6.4 JG commented on huge value to industry of the work that Seafish is undertaking on the Landings Obligation. JPo commented that it was disappointing that DEFRA had

not provided Seafish with all the information it needed to be able to do the work better/quicker. JPo advised that the Minister was announcing further information at Selsey today and commented that it is important that this work moves on apace, because the industry is running out of time.

6.5 ML advised that the Shetland industry welcomed the work done by Seafish, but they would like Seafish to point out that the Landings Obligation is incompatible with Article 2 of the CFP.

6.6 MB advised members of an article in The Times newspaper today which stated that fishermen will continue to dump cod. He commented that this type of scare mongering is damaging to the industry. He requested Seafish help in countering these stories. HC responded that she was working closely with Comms on this. Seafish cannot undertake lobbying, but can refer to the facts.

6.7 KM observed that discards result when fish, for which there is insufficient quota, are abundant on the grounds. He commented that it was a shame that this work had not been done earlier, before the political decision was taken to adopt a Landings Obligation.

6.8 HC recognised the need to keep resource available within her team to continue this analysis as new information becomes available, enabling further impact assessments to be undertaken.

7. Meetings Schedule 2016

7.1 JG advised that the Panel Chairs wanted to have another all-Panel meeting and asked members if they supported the idea. Members agreed.

7.2 MB suggested a Conference along similar lines to one held previously by Seafish in Edinburgh, with presentations from key stakeholders.

7.3 JE asked for feedback on previous all-Panel meeting; CL advised that his Panel members felt that there was too much from the centre and not enough discussion.

7.4 TP advised that the Importers & Processors Panel (at its recent meeting) did not support the idea. DJ suggested that if two out of three Panels wanted it, then it should go ahead.

7.5 TP noted that the Consumers & Supply Chain Panel was keen for horizon scanning to be the focus of a joint meeting. DR suggested the meeting should focus on science.

ACTION 8.7: Seafish to come up with firm proposal for joint meeting for consideration by Panel members.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 JPo advised that at a recent Fishermen's Mission meeting, representatives from HM Revenue & Customs promoted its voluntary scheme to help self-employed share fishermen budget for Income Tax and National Insurance contributions <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/share-fisherman-tax-budgeting-scheme> and had advised that an amnesty was currently being offered to fishermen who signed up.

ACTION 8.8: SP to ensure that information on the scheme is being given to experienced fishermen and new entrants attending training.

8.2 MM advised that an anti-slavery case against a Scottish skipper had been dropped.

9. Date of Next Meeting

9.1 February 2016 – date to be agreed/confirmed via Doodle Poll.