

**MINUTES OF THE NIFCA QUARTERLY MEETING**  
**HELD BY MICROSOFT TEAMS ON MONDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2021 AT 2PM**

**PRESENT: NIFCA Members:**

Mr L Weller (Chair), Vice Chair Ms W Pattison (WP), Mr F Armstrong (FA), Mrs E Cartie (EC), Mrs L Dunn (LD), Mr P Gray (PG), Dr M Kitching (MK), Mr N Polunin (NP), Mr G Renner-Thomspon (GRT), Mr A B Ritchie (SR), Mr G Roughead (GR), Mrs C Seymour (CSe), Dr C Scott (CSc), Mr B Burdis (BB), Mr I Thomas (IT) and Mr D Thompson (DT).

The meeting was also joined by Bex Lynam (The Wildlife Trusts).

Also in attendance from NIFCA were the Chief Executive Officer Mr M H Hardy (CEO), Chief IFCO Mr M Southerton (MS), Lead IFCO Alex Aitken (AA), Lead IFCO Nick Weir (NW), Finance Officer Mr J Sutton (JuS) and the NIFCA Administrative Officer Miss K Smart (KS).

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies:

Apologies for absence were received from Mr S Lowe (SL) and Mr P Rippon (PR).

Declarations of Interest:

No declarations of interest were received.

Welcome from the Chair:

The Chair welcomed everyone to the public meeting and wished IFCO Mark Lynn well.

CEO thanked the officers for the reports which had been sent to the members in advance of this meeting and which demonstrate how NIFCA have continued to function effectively during the covid pandemic. CEO also said that due to his sick leave and covid, this meeting is necessarily shorter than normal, but will cover all essential governance and we will hopefully resume full Watch, Finance and General Meetings in April, covid permitting. In addition, the Technical & Scientific Meeting minutes are to be finalised and sent to members in the next week and the CEO asked for any comments on the October Watch & General Meeting minutes (which were just sent to members late in the previous week) to be sent to NIFCA after the Quarterly Meeting. These minutes may then be approved in April at the next full Quarterly Meeting.

**TO CONFIRM AND APPROVE THE AUTHORITY BUDGET FOR 2021 - 2022**

GR requested more information for the decision upon the Authority Audit continuing with Northumberland County Council and also regarding the updating amendments to the Authority Financial Regulations which had been introduced by JuS. The CEO agreed that a paper could be produced and sent to the Finance Committee confirming the position for approval as soon as possible. It was also confirmed that the Audit is due to begin in May.

The Authority budget for 2021-22 and the other finance papers which had been sent to members in advance of the meeting were approved and agreed by all of the members present.

The CEO confirmed that he will forward the precept documents to the Chair and Vice Chair for signature and they will then be submitted to both councils. The CEO thanked members for their consideration of this and other matters at the meeting.

### **3.12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The CEO was pleased to confirm that after discussions between himself, the Chair and Chief IFCO, the Jon Green Award for Excellence would be given to Katy Smart for her work during the pandemic for steering the administration work of the Authority, bringing the different sectors together and bringing on board a new member of the admin team successfully.

The above was greeted with approval by the membership.

The Chair expressed hope of having a face-to-face meeting this year. EC added that remote teams is beneficial for some of the meetings because it saves on travel time and costs.

The next quarterly meeting of the Authority will take place on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021 by Microsoft Teams.

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 14:25