

## **STANDING ORDERS**

1. The meetings of the NIFCA shall be held quarterly on the fourth Monday in each of the months of January, April, July and October, at the County Hall, Morpeth, at 2.00 p.m. or at such other time or place as the “Chair” of the NIFCA may decide (“the Quarterly Meeting”). The Quarterly Meeting will comprise a meeting of the Authority Finance Committee, followed by a meeting of the Authority Watch Committee. Both of those meetings will be held privately and attended only by Members and Officers of the Authority, unless the Chair directs that any other person may attend either meeting regarding Authority business. The Quarterly Meeting is completed by a General meeting (the “General Meeting”) of the Authority which is a public meeting and will be advertised on the Authority website at least 7 days before the date of the meeting.
2. The April Quarterly Meeting shall be the Annual Meeting of the NIFCA when the NIFCA will elect a Chair, Vice-Chair and the members of any Standing Committees and Subcommittees for the forthcoming year.
3. There shall be such adjournments of each Quarterly Meeting or the Annual Meeting as the NIFCA at such meetings may so resolve.
4. The before-mentioned Quarterly and Adjourned Meetings (if any) and sub-committee meetings shall be the Ordinary Meetings of the NIFCA. All other meetings of the NIFCA shall be called Extraordinary Meetings.
5. The Chair of the NIFCA may at any time call an Extraordinary Meeting.
6. The Chief Officer of the NIFCA shall, upon a requisition for an Extraordinary Meeting, made by not less than three in number of the Members of the NIFCA, in writing under their hands, and deposited with him or her specifying the object for which such meeting is required, convene such meeting to be held within fourteen days from the time of such requisition being received by him or her.
7. Seven clear days notice, at the least, of a meeting, specifying the place, day and hour and, in the case of an Extraordinary Meeting, the purpose for which it is to be held, shall be given to each member for the time being of the NIFCA.

### **Procedure**

8. The order of business at every General meeting of the NIFCA shall be as follows:
  - (1) Declaration of interest and apologies for absence.
  - (2) Confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting and Extraordinary Meetings, if any.
  - (3) Matters arising out of the minutes of the last meeting and during the period since the last General Meeting.
  - (4) Letters and communications to the NIFCA to be considered.

- (5) Report of the Finance Committee
- (6) Report of the Watch Committee.
- (7) The report of any other Standing or Subcommittee.
- (8) The quarterly reports of the Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officers.
- (9) Motions of which due notice shall have been given,
- (10) All other matters brought before the NIFCA.

### **Attendance Book**

9. Members shall sign their names in an Attendance Book and only the names of the persons present and so entered shall be recorded in the Minutes of the Meeting.

### **Minutes**

10. The Minutes of the previous meeting of the NIFCA shall be copied and circulated to the members with the notice and agenda paper and, when submitted for confirmation, may be taken as read. The formal resolution that the minutes, "copies thereof having been circulated to all members, be confirmed and signed by the Chair" shall be given from the Chair and no discussion shall be allowed thereon except for matters arising and as to the minutes accuracy, save with the leave of the Chair which shall be decided by vote of the NIFCA in the ordinary way.

### **Notices of Motion**

11. Notices of Motion shall be given in writing, signed by the member of the NIFCA giving the Notice, and countersigned by two other members and shall be delivered to the Chief Officer of the NIFCA so as to be received not later than noon of the fifteenth day prior to the day of the meeting of the NIFCA at which the same is to be considered.
12. A Motion, of which Notice has been given, shall be moved by the member who gave the Notice, but in the case of his absence any other member may, by permission of the NIFCA, move it in his stead.

### **Rescission or Amendments of Resolutions**

13. No Resolution agreed to or adopted at any Meeting of the NIFCA shall be rescinded or altered without fourteen days Notice of Motion, signed by the mover of the Notice and two other members of the NIFCA, having been entered in the Minute Book, stating the precise nature of the proposed alteration, and the date of the Meeting at which such revocation or alteration is to be brought under discussion; and of such Notice the Chief Officer shall give intimation to every member when convening the meeting.

### **Rules of Debate**

14. A member, when he or she has a desire to speak, shall address themselves exclusively to the Chair, attending in silence at all other times to the subject matter of discussion.

15. If two or more members appear to rise to speak simultaneously the Chair shall decide which of them is entitled to speak, and shall call upon him or her to do so.
16. When the Chair speaks no one else shall continue speaking.
17. At the Chair's discretion a member may speak more than once on any one question or business. Also, if a member has introduced an item of business him/herself they may claim the privilege of final reply or a member may be asked to explain their previous remarks if that is deemed necessary in the opinion of the Chair.
18. The Standing Orders or any of them shall be read over when any member, on a point of order, shall call upon the Chief Officer to do so. The Chair shall have full authority to enforce the Standing Orders or other regulations, and his or her decision shall be final.

### **Quorum**

19. The quorum of the NIFCA at a General Meeting shall be 6 members of the NIFCA with at least one of those members a council member and one a general member.

### **Voting**

20. The mode of voting shall be by show of hands unless four members present demand a Division or that is decreed by the Chair of the meeting, in which case the names of those voting for and against a Resolution or amendment shall be taken down in writing and entered in the Minutes.

### **Standing Committees and Subcommittees**

21. The following Committees shall be Standing Committees:
  - i. Finance Committee.
  - ii. Watch Committee.
22. The same members may be appointed to the Watch and Finance Committees.
23. Unless expressly excepted, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the NIFCA shall be members **ex officio** of the Watch and Finance Standing Committees.
24. All Standing and Subcommittee meetings will be chaired by the Authority Chair (save for the Technical and Scientific Sub-committee which has its own Terms of Reference) but if that is not possible then every Standing Committee and Subcommittee shall elect its own Chair.
25. Unless otherwise specially ordered by the NIFCA, the quorum of every Standing Committee and Subcommittee shall be four.
26. The NIFCA and each Standing Committee shall have power to appoint such Subcommittees as it may from time to time determine, and to delegate to such Subcommittees any of its functions.
27. The Standing Orders of the NIFCA under the headings "Procedure" and "Rules of Debate" shall, so far as applicable and reasonably practicable, regulate the procedure of the Standing Committees.

28. The Chair of each Standing and Subcommittee shall summon its meetings and sign and present its reports.
29. In order to ensure the continuous discharge of the ordinary current business of the NIFCA, pending the reconstitution of the Standing Committees after the quadrennial retirement of members of the Northumberland County Council and the North Tyneside Council each Standing Committee shall, after each such quadrennial retirement and until reconstituted by the NIFCA, consist of such continuing or re-elected members of the NIFCA as immediately prior to such quadrennial retirement were members of the NIFCA.

### **Finance Committee**

30. The Finance Committee shall be constituted of up to twelve members.
31. The duties of the Finance Committee shall be as follows:
  - i. To meet as often as required, but meetings shall normally be held quarterly on the same day as the General meetings of the NIFCA and prior to the General (public) meeting of the Authority;
  - ii. To ascertain and report as to what calls it may be necessary to make on the Northumberland County Council and the North Tyneside Council and to investigate and report as to the payment of all calls made;
  - iii. To examine all bills and accounts of charges and demands against the NIFCA;
  - iv. To supervise generally and report on the financial concerns of the NIFCA including staff salaries.

### **Watch Committee**

32. The Watch Committee shall be constituted of up to twelve members.
33. The duties of the Watch Committee shall be as follows:
  - i. To meet as often as required, but meetings shall normally be held quarterly on the same day as the General meetings of the NIFCA and prior to the General (public) meeting of the Authority;
  - ii. To make and issue directions to be observed by the Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officers.
  - iii. To take such steps as they may from time to time decide to secure the observance in the District of the NIFCA bye-laws and the provision of any statute;
  - iv. To require the Chief Officer to engage a solicitor to act for and represent the Authority in connection with the prosecution of any offence and also Counsel if in any case they deem it desirable;
  - v. To authorise the Chief Officer to pay the Court fees and expenses and the fees of any solicitor or Counsel instructed on their behalf, and the fees and expenses of any witnesses who may attend the Court in support of any prosecution;
  - vi. To receive the Patrol Vessel Reports and to recommend the authorisation of such expenditure and such improvements as may be

necessary to maintain the NIFCA patrol vessel in a seaworthy condition and ensure the continuation of sea patrols.

- vii. Any other matters within the Authority remit requiring decision by members prior to or separate from discussion at a General meeting of the Authority.

### **Members Attendance**

34. Local Authority Members and Statutory Members. If the elected Councillor Member or appointed Statutory Member of the NIFCA cannot attend a meeting of the NIFCA then the meeting may vote by a majority to accept the attendance but only with speaking rights and no voting rights of a suitable Council Officer or another Officer from the Statutory Authority (MMO or EA or NE) at that meeting.
35. MMO appointed members may not send a deputy if they cannot attend the meeting and if an MMO appointed member fails without good reason to attend three consecutive meetings then they may be removed from the NIFCA on a vote by a majority of the members attending the third meeting when the MMO member has failed to attend. The MMO, Environment Agency and Natural England Member may each send a Deputy (this should be the exception rather than the rule) who is also employed by their organisation and with the leave of the Chair that person will have speaking rights but not voting rights
36. Persons who are not NIFCA members but who are members of any organisation who have specific experience and knowledge which is pertinent to discussions or decisions of the NIFCA or individuals having such experience and knowledge can be invited by the Chief Officer to attend and address the meeting.

### **Code of Conduct**

37. The NIFCA members should adhere in so far as applicable to all the NIFCA governance documents and particularly to the NIFCA Code of Conduct and Guidance on Declarations of Interest and subject to any variation or replacement thereof and a copy of which has been forwarded to all NIFCA members.

### **Members Acting for NIFCA**

38. In all cases members of the NIFCA should not hold themselves out to be acting with the authority of the NIFCA unless they have the authority to do so. Such acts would include use of the NIFCA logo on non-NIFCA communications and attending meetings as a member of the NIFCA unless attendance is sanctioned by the NIFCA.

### **Amendment**

39. The NIFCA Constitution and Standing Orders may be amended by a majority vote of members at a Quarterly or Annual Meeting upon a written "Notice of Motion" by the Chief Officer with the terms of the proposed amendment to be confirmed in writing to the members at least 14 days before the said meeting.

### **Public Participation**

40. Following such a request, or by invitation, members of the public may speak or ask questions at meetings which are open to the public and for a reasonable time on any agenda item or other matter within the purview of the Authority, subject to the

approval and under the direction of the Chair. Notice of request to speak should give the person's name and address and indication of the subject matter to be raised and should be received by the Chief Officer to the Authority in writing at least 48 hours before the date and time of the meeting.

#### **Association of IFCA Meetings**

41. Whilst attending Association of IFCA meetings or in any other urgent context the Chief Officer and Chair (or their Deputies) acting together may agree with proposals on behalf of NIFCA which it has not been possible to previously raise or discuss with the wider membership.

#### **Attendance at Authority Meetings**

42. A meeting may be held with some or all of the members and officers (and any other persons who are attending the meeting with the leave of the Chair) communicating by electronic means, rather than all of the participants needing to be physically present at an appointed venue for the meeting and provided each participant may communicate with all of the others who are in attendance (both in person and electronically) at the meeting.

**Mark Southerton  
CHIEF OFFICER**

**May 2024**