

## Minutes General Committee Meeting - July 2024 -

<b>Date</b>	Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2024	<b>Time</b>	13:00
<b>Venue</b>	NIFCA, 8 Ennerdale Road, Blyth, NE24 4RT		
<b>NIFCA Members</b>	Amelia Henderson (Chair), Guy Renner-Thompson (GRT), Frank Armstrong (FA), Liz Dunn (LD), Brian Douglas (BD), Patrick Gray (PG), Colin Hardy (CH), Martin Kitching (MK), Steve Lowe (SL), Pip Moore (PM), Catherine Scott (CS), Martin Swinbank (MS) and Ian Thomas (IT).		
<b>Officers/ Staff</b>	Mark Southerton (MS), Julian Sutton (JuS), Nick Weir (NW), Alex Aitken (AA), Sarah Richardson (SR), Emma Stiles (ES).		

<b>3.1</b>	<b>Meeting Matters</b>	<b>Record</b>
<b>Apologies</b>	Catherine Seymour (CSe), James Wood (JW), Tommy Mulvenna (TM), Alex Wallace (AW)	
<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	SL – Page 97 – Marine Licence Application – SL works for the National Rivers Trust.	
<b>Chair's welcome</b>	Welcome to new members BD and TM following JiS and BB leaving.	

<b>3.2</b>	<b>Draft minutes: General Committee Meeting: 22 April 2024</b>	<b>Approval</b>
	Received by the members.	
<b>Proposed acceptance</b>	MS	<b>Seconded</b> SL <b>Approved by all</b>

<b>3.3</b>	<b>Meetings attended throughout the quarter</b>	<b>Information</b>
MS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CLUE training sessions have taken place since the report was created.</li> </ul>	

<b>3.4</b>	<b>Coquet to St Mary's MCZ Management of Trawling</b>	<b>Decision</b>
BD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Raised a Declaration of Interest in this matter.</b></li> </ul>	
AH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BD is encouraged to stay for the discussion but can leave if it is ever felt required. He is unable to vote.</li> </ul>	
AA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This matter has arisen due to the MCZ assessment for otter trawling and following other mobile gear, heavy otter trawl and scallop dredging now being prohibited – the assessment concludes that the activity may be hindering the conservation objective of the subtidal mud feature, so have had to consider its management via a Working Group. Management options outlined in the report.</li> <li>The Working Group recommends <b>option 2</b> as it represents an adaptive approach - still allowing trawling activities to take place but with an effort cap.</li> <li>Data from 2022 suggests that 1 maybe 2 fishers who would be impacted.</li> </ul>	
IT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Putting in a sunset clause means fishers lose out. Prevents making money from the licence, passing it on to someone etc. It doesn't seem to support the fishers and is weighted in favour of the conservation objectives and not balanced.</li> </ul>	

MK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the T&amp;S meeting objected to a sunset clause that would shut down activity completely.</li> </ul>
AA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feel that option 2 takes the needs of the fishers into account, allowing them to continue using the site but with limitations. Sunset clause remains optional.</li> </ul>
BD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feels unnecessary to close it down when there's such little trawling activity. There's only a certain track we're fishing as the areas surrounding it can't be trawled – it's a single track we use so it's such minimal effort.</li> </ul>
AA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request membersWto decide today which option to progress, then we can advance it in the Working Group, ideally with BD input too. We need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set out exactly what the agreements will be,</li> <li>Seek further legal advice re. whether this can be done through permit conditions,</li> <li>Consider a sunset clause to ensure we're fulfilling the objectives.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
AH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asked members to vote for their chosen option</li> <li>Anyone wishing to leave the meeting may do so now (all remained).</li> </ul>
<b>Vote</b>	<b>All members voted unanimously for option 2</b>

<b>3.5</b>	<b>Member Matters</b>	<b>Information</b>
AH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Would like to have a membership profile on the website including headshots and bio – makes us a bit more transparent.</li> <li><b>ES to email all members about this.</b></li> </ul>	
MS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Still have a member vacancy – please share details with anyone who might be interested.</li> <li>6 members appointments due to come to an end next year – email to follow to affected members.</li> <li>We would encourage all members to continue with their appointments.</li> </ul>	
AH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NIFCA must appoint 3 members to sit on the Noth Sunderland Harbour Commission – since LW retirement, we are 1 member short.</li> <li>Cllr CSe has volunteered, and members need to agree and vote on this.</li> </ul>	
<b>Nominated by</b>	IT	<b>Seconded by</b> SL
<b>Vote</b>	<b>All members voted unanimously for CSe to sit on NSHC</b>	

<b>3.6</b>	<b>Netting Consultation</b>	<b>Information</b>
MS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This closed at the end of June - we received 1 response from Angling Trust.</li> <li>They had no substantive issues – proposal gives more protection to the inshore area – questioned water depth through the year – questioned protection of salmonids.</li> <li>Will respond to them and MMO.</li> <li>MMO Currently have 13 IFCA byelaws to consider due to the MPA byelaw deadline 2024.</li> </ul>	

<b>3.7</b>	<b>Final Accounts for the year ending 2023/24</b>	<b>Approval</b>
AH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Really useful narrative, thank you JuS.</li> </ul>	
MSw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When is the PV likely to need replacing and are we projected to reach that cost?</li> </ul>	
MS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a 5 and 10year projection: NIFCA paid £800k for St Aidan in 2015 – Eastern IFCA recently had almost identical built at the same yard at £1.5m.</li> <li>JuS report recommended increase to £50k annually which has been done.</li> <li>There is likely to be a substantial shortfall although St Aidan resale value to be considered, and any national funding available at the time.</li> <li>St Aidan currently in a good place so no expectation to replace in near future.</li> </ul>	
<b>Proposed acceptance</b>	SL	<b>Seconded</b> IT <b>Approved by all</b>

<b>3.8</b>	<b>NIFCA Audit Report</b>	<b>Approval</b>
AH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No recommendations from the audit team – excellent work from JuS.</li> </ul>	
<b>Proposed acceptance</b>	MK	<b>Seconded</b>
	SL	<b>Approved by all</b>

<b>3.9</b>	<b>Chief's Summary Reports: Finance/Watch Committee</b>	<b>Information</b>
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The minutes of the last Finance meeting were approved, and members received the finance papers including RDel in and out statements.</li> <li>Received budget report, audit report, second instalment of precept prepared for signature this afternoon.</li> <li>Accepted paper re. lease including tenant break and review at 5 years.</li> <li>Confirmed SR starting at NIFCA on a 2-year fixed term.</li> <li>Looking to review the member expenses claim form.</li> </ul>	
Watch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The minutes of the last Watch meeting were approved.</li> <li>Discussed St Aidan's fuel issue – will document/ feedback to next meeting.</li> <li>Received update on MCA Workboat 3 code.</li> <li>Agreed to sell old pots and donate proceeds to Fisherman's Mission</li> </ul>	

<b>3.10</b>	<b>IFCO Reports</b>	<b>Information</b>
<b>3.10.1 - Chief Officer's Report</b>		
MS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Received draft of SC Theory of Change report.</li> </ul>	
AH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>NIFCA to get wreath for Fishermen's National Day of Remembrance 2025</b></li> </ul>	
<b>3.10.2 - Enforcement Report</b>		
NW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both vessels have been out of action during this quarter but should be back up and running from tomorrow.</li> <li>Discussed the reduction of permit holders – gone down by about 20 permits (25%) from last year – a lot of holders weren't fishing but routinely taking out a shellfish permit whilst trawling. Some have retired but we are looking at the general demographic of permit holders to see if we can see any trends.</li> </ul>	
MS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SC looking at this reduction of numbers in this area (particularly in under 10 fleet) to see if management is having an impact.</li> </ul>	
BD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MCZs will have an impact – who's going to invest £150k in a new business to fish in an area when it might be closed.</li> <li>Used to have lots of kids interested in the fishing boats but they don't seem to be anymore due to the reduction in numbers of vessels working from the harbour.</li> </ul>	
<b>3.10.3 - Environmental Report</b>		
SL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As per DoI re. marine licence for the dumping ground – long period of dumping in the area until 2038.</li> <li>There is an Estuary management plan – using silts from Harbour to create habitats.</li> <li>May be Wear removal which will increase the amount of silt available.</li> <li>We need to collectively get together with a catchment-based approach – silt has come from upstream – until we consider this, there won't be a reduction. Need a more holistic approach – intend to write to MMO about this from River's Trust.</li> </ul>	
AH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fish surveys – anyone wanting to volunteer please do.</li> </ul>	
<b>3.10.4 - Maintenance Report</b>		
AH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Received with thanks to WM – lots of technical issues to have to deal with.</li> </ul>	

<b>3.11</b>	<b>Acronyms Table</b>	<b>Information</b>
AH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Received with thanks.</li> </ul>	

<b>3.12</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	<b>Information</b>
SL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is now a voluntary group monitoring water quality driven by WI called CRAG.</li> <li>Thank you to Cllr Dunn for stepping up and saying well done to NIFCA and River's Trust at Council meeting. Would be good to get an update and an approach by NIFCA would be useful.</li> </ul>	
LD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is now a storyboard on the Council website – LD will send the link.</li> <li>Work should be completed by October/November.</li> </ul>	
MS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will consider meeting venues for next QM and contact members.</li> </ul>	

The meeting was closed by the Chair at 14:15

## Actions for Next Meeting

Item	Action	Who
3.5	ES to email all members about member bio/headshots.	ES
3.10.1	NIFCA to get wreath for Fishermen's National Day of Remembrance 2025	MS