

Menai Strait Fishery Order Management Association

Meeting, 2nd July 2018
Myti Mussels, Port Penrhyn

Minutes

Attendance

Alan Winstone
James Wilson
Keith Andrews
Rowland Sharp

Chair
Bangor Mussel Producers Ltd
Licensed hand pickers
Natural Resources Wales

Observers

Kim Mould
Trevor Jones

BMWAG
Menai Strait (West)

Advisors

Jim Andrews

MSFOMA Secretariat

1. Chair's announcements

There were no announcements.

2. Apologies

Ioan Thomas
Stuart Evans
Lewis le Vay
Tim Croucher
Iwan Huws

Gwynedd County Council
Welsh Government (Head of Fisheries Policy)
Bangor University
Welsh Government
Isle of Anglesey County Council

3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting that took place on 26th April 2018 were accepted, pending some minor corrections.

4. Matters Arising

It was considered that most of the matters arising from the last meeting were addressed on the agenda for the current meeting. Some items were discussed:-

Wales National Marine Plan

Jim Andrews indicated that he had been in contact with Phil Coates from Welsh Government. Mr Coates had clarified the position on "Strategic Resource Areas". All of the Fishery Orders in Wales were excluded from these areas. It was agreed that clarification on the policy implications of this would be helpful.

Action: Secretariat

Community Fund

It was noted that this fund had been discussed at previous meetings. It was considered that it would be appropriate to write to The Crown Estate to enquire whether they are interested in developing a Fund in partnership with the Association.

Action: Secretariat & James Wilson

5. Membership of the Association

It was noted that Lewis LeVay had indicated that he was unable to take up the invitation to act as a Director of the Association because of a potential conflict of interest.

Alan Winstone and Jim Andrews both indicated that they would be happy to act as Directors. It was considered that Jim could also have a potential conflict of interest.

It was noted that landowners had not yet been approached to invite a representative to participate in meetings of the Association. It was agreed that this should be done.

Action: Secretariat

It was noted that a list of user groups that MSFOMA should liaise with also needed to be produced. It was agreed that this should be done.

Action: Secretariat

6. Financial Update

Papers from the accountants were not available for discussion at the meeting. It was agreed that an update on Association Finances should be considered at the next Association meeting, which should be an Annual General Meeting.

Action: Secretariat & James Wilson

7. EU General Data Protection Requirements

The meeting discussed the report outlining the work that had been carried out to ensure compliance with these Regulations.

It was agreed that compliance with the GDPR should be kept under review.

8. Welsh Government Activity

a) Meetings of Fisheries Groups

It was noted that two meetings of the Welsh Marine Fisheries Advisory Group had taken place (7th March and 16th May). The Association noted that at the March meeting it had been agreed that the Aquaculture Advisory Group should be reformed.

The meeting felt that the AAG was important for ensuring that progress was being made with the Welsh Government's strategic objectives for aquaculture development. It was agreed that enquiries should be made to WG to find out whether there had been any progress with this.

Action: Secretariat

b) Consultations

Members had collaborated to prepare a response to the National Assembly's Climate Change, Environment & Rural Affairs Committee on the impact of Brexit on fisheries in Wales. The National Assembly had proposed a meeting with stakeholders in Milford Haven on the 12th July. Members were keen to take part in this process but as a consequence of the location and short notice, nobody was able to attend the meeting. There was also concern that the "workshop" format of the meeting was less likely to be productive than a formal hearing of stakeholders' individual views.

It was agreed that apologies should be submitted to the National Assembly in respect of this meeting. It was also agreed that the National Assembly should be encouraged to adopt a format that would ensure that the Committee heard a balanced range of views.

Action: Secretariat

c) Meeting with Welsh Government officials

The Chair and Secretariat reported that a very productive meeting had been held with Welsh Government officials on the 13th June 2018. The renewal of both the Menai West Fishery Order and the eastern Order had been discussed. All who had met with Janet Perry, the officer now responsible for Fishery Order applications, were very impressed with the progress she had made in a very short time.

It was agreed that it would be important to maintain regular contact with Janet Perry. The Secretariat was asked to ensure that this happened.

Action: Secretariat

d) Meeting with Cabinet Secretary

A brief but very productive meeting had taken place with Lesley Griffiths, Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning & Rural Affairs on the 21st June 2018. The Cabinet Secretary had visited the FV Valente. She had made a commitment to take a decision on the Menai West Fishery Order application within 2 months, and had also shown interest in visiting the Menai Strait again for a trip aboard one of the mussel dredgers.

Following the meeting, the Chair had written to the Cabinet Secretary to thank her for the visit and to propose dates for a further visit to Port Penrhyn. No response had yet been received. It was agreed that this offer should be followed up.

Action: Chair & Secretariat

9. NW IFCA Activity

The report on recent activities of the NW IFCA was received and accepted by the meeting.

It was noted that a helicopter flight over the seed mussel beds in Morecambe Bay was scheduled for 16th July. Mandy Knott from the IFCA and Katherine Nisbet from Natural England were due to be participating.

It was reported that hand gatherers had collected around 30t of seed mussels from South America mussel skear.

The group discussed the policy basis used by the IFCA to identify “ephemeral” mussel beds that could be harvested for seed mussels; and also to distinguish mussel beds that should be reserved for hand gatherers from those where dredging was permissible. It was agreed that enquiries could be made to the IFCA about the status of the “Fishery Management Plan” that has been proposed for the mussel fishery.

Action: Secretariat

It was further agreed that Jim Andrews should circulate the most recent version of the mussel Fishery Management Plan.

Action: Secretariat

10. Menai Strait East Fishery Order Renewal

a) Renewal of Order

It was reported that the uncertainties about the application forms that should be used had been resolved at the meeting with WG officials in June. The application would be completed and submitted as soon as possible.

Action: Secretariat

The Association had taken up an invitation to meet with Beaumaris Town Council on the 2nd July in the evening. It was agreed that the Association should be represented by the Chair & Secretariat. Kim Mould and Trevor Jones also offered to attend the meeting to provide practical advice.

Action: Secretariat & Chair

b) Code of Good Practice

Rowland Sharpe reported that NRW now has an additional member of staff in place and would be able to work with the Association to review this Code.

Action: James Wilson, Rowland Sharpe, Secretariat

c) Lease fees

The meeting discussed the letter from Keith Andrews and Dewi Morris about lease fees for the Ballast Bank laying. The Chair reported that he had walked around this laying with the lessees in the morning prior to the meeting to inspect the site and discuss mussel cultivation opportunities there.

It was agreed that the decision to defer requests for lease fees for the next 12 months that was taken at the last meeting was appropriate.

It was noted that the Association had considered the lease fee charged for this area previously, and had resolved that an equal fee should be charged for all layings. It was felt that the Association should defer any decision on the charge for leasing this laying until a future meeting with more Members present.

It was agreed that a formal letter should be sent to the lessees of the new layings to communicate the Association's position.

Action: Secretariat & Chair

d) Communications

It was agreed that the Association should seek opportunities for improving communication and interaction with a wider community of stakeholders in the area. It was noted that the Beaumaris Food Festival was taking place on September 1st-2nd, and that this could provide a good opportunity.

Action: ?

It was also noted that the University holds a science open day in April, and that this would be a useful opportunity.

It was agreed that once the application for the Fishery Order had been submitted it would be appropriate to hold some "drop in" sessions for members of the public. Plans for this could be made at the next Association meeting.

Action: Secretariat

11. Menai Strait West

The report on this matter was received and discussed. It was noted that Welsh Government officials had now visited the western Menai Strait, and that the Cabinet Secretary had committed to taking a decision on the Fishery Order application by mid-August 2018.

It was agreed that action should continue to be taken to encourage progress with the application for renewal of this Fishery Order.

Action: Chair & Secretariat

12. Funding proposals

James Wilson provided a brief update on progress with projects.

Offshore area - anchors and lines were installed in June. There are now 6 full sized headlines in the area. Settlement media were due to be installed

EMFF Bid - a bid for funding to explore regulatory & technical compliance issues in the industry has been submitted.

The Association would be updated on progress with these projects.

13. Fishery Management Issues

a) Coastal / marine developments

i. Bangor Pier

Kim Mould reported that maintenance work was continuing and that there had been no problems.

ii. Dickies Boatyard Development

There had been no further consultations about this project.

It was understood that work on the project has been delayed following the discovery of Japanese knotweed on the site.

iii. Sand in the dock

Operators confirmed that this was still an issue. The Secretariat had not yet written to the Penrhyn Estate to raise concerns about it. It was agreed that this should be done as a matter of urgency.

Action: Secretariat

b) Environmental / health issues

i. Bonamia

No additional news.

ii. Invasive Alien Species (IAS) / Invasive Non Native Species (INNS)

James Wilson reported that 2 female Chinese mitten crabs (*Eriocheir sinensis*) had been found in the Walney Channel by some anglers. The industry would liaise with the NW-IFCA, Natural England and NRW to ensure that the risk of accidental introduction of this species to the Menai Strait was managed.

Rowland Sharpe reported that *Didemnum vexillum* had been recorded on the hull of the old trawler FV Fair Isle in the harbour. The vessel is immobile and has no engine; however there was a new outfall pipe being assembled in the vicinity of this trawler. He understood that this pipe was destined for installation in Blackpool

Rowland also reported that during September an NRW team is due to survey areas of seashore in the areas where material from the destroyed pontoon had become stranded.

iii. Ballast Water Convention

Kim Mould reported that the FV *Valente* is now fully compliant with the requirements of this Convention.

iv. Food Standards Agency

James Wilson provided an update on progress with the FSA's "Regulating Our Future" project¹. This sought to move some of the responsibility for monitoring food hygiene from regulators to producers, and applies to fish and shellfish production. As part of this project the SAGB is chairing a "Shellfish Stakeholder Working Group" to discuss proposals and provide advice. Two meetings of this group have already taken place, and the next is due to be held in July.

Once the projects and processes developed under this project have been identified, the FSA is due to submit a funding application to support further work.

It was agreed that MSFOMA should monitor progress with this work. There could be a role for MSFOMA in the implementation of proposals arising from the project.

James Wilson agreed to provide a summary of the project for information.

Action: James Wilson

v. Norovirus

As reported at the previous meeting, two studies on *Norovirus* are due for publication later in 2018.

vi. Discharge pipe,

James Wilson reported that a new discharge pipe had been installed from the new housing development near to Port Penrhyn. This pipe discharged into Afon Cegin opposite the junction with the drainage channel for Cegin Pool. It was agreed that the developer (Watkin Jones) should be asked about the nature of this pipe.

Action: Secretariat

c) Meetings attended

i. Caernarfon Harbour Trust

No information.

14. Any Other Business

a) Funding for Research and Innovation in Food, Agriculture, Marine and the Rural Economy

Trevor Jones reported that he had been informed that a workshop on this matter was being held on the 10th July. He would investigate further to see if attendance by MSFOMA might be useful.

Action: Trevor Jones

¹ Website here: <https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/regulating-our-future>

15. Date for next meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting should take place in September: either on the 10th, 11th, or the week commencing the 24th. The Secretariat was asked to canvass Members for the preferred date.

Summary of Actions

Item	Action	Responsibility
1.	Wales National Marine Plan - clarify policy with respect to existing Fishery Orders	Secretariat
2.	Community Fund - write to Crown Estate, provide update to next meeting.	JW, Secretariat
3.	Membership - write to landowners to seek representative.	Secretariat
4.	User / liaison groups - compile list, seek representation	Secretariat
5.	Finances - report to next meeting.	JW, Secretariat
6.	Welsh Government Aquaculture Advisory Group - enquire about status.	Secretariat
7.	Brexit implications - submit apologies for meeting on 12 th July and explain why.	Secretariat
8.	Menai West - liaise with WG officials to ensure progress is maintained.	Secretariat
9.	Cabinet Secretary - liaise to organise site visit and maintain progress with Menai West	Chair, Secretariat
10.	NWIFCA Mussel Fishery Management Plan - circulate most recent version and make enquiries to IFCA about plans for progressing this.	Secretariat
11.	Menai East - complete and submit application.	Secretariat
12.	Code of Good Practice - revise this to take account of new INNS and changes to legislation	JW, RS, Secretariat
13.	Leases, Ballast Bank & Bangor Deep - write to lessees to confirm MSFOMA position; put on agenda for next meeting.	Secretariat, Chair
14.	Beaumaris Food Festival - organise MSFOMA presence.	TJ, Secretariat
15.	Menai East - make plans for stakeholder engagement at "drop in" sessions.	Secretariat
16.	Sand in Dock - MSFOMA to write to Penrhyn Estate about this.	Secretariat
17.	FSA "Regulating Our Future" - provide information about this project.	JW
18.	Afon Cegin discharge pipe - find out more about this pipe, determine if it would discharge sewage effluent.	Secretariat
19.	Funding etc event on 10 th July - find out if MSFOMA attendance likely to be helpful.	TJ
20.	Date for next meeting - canvass members	Secretariat