

Menai Strait Fishery Order Management Association

Meeting, 3rd July 2014
Ynys Faelog, Menai Bridge

Minutes

Attendance

Sue Utting	Chair
Lewis le Vay	Bangor University
Tim Croucher	Welsh Assembly Government
James Wilson	Bangor Mussel Producers Ltd
Rowland Sharp	Natural Resources Wales
Ioan Thomas	Gwynedd County Council
Keith Andrews	Licensed hand pickers

Advisors

Jim Andrews	
Trevor Jones	Menai Strait (West) Fishery Order

1. Chair's announcements

2. Apologies

Mike Barton	Ynys Môn County Council
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3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting that took place on 13th March 2014 were accepted.

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.

It was noted that the Minister had not been notified of Sue Utting's re-appointment as Chair, and that a letter should be sent.

Action: JW

5. Membership of the Association

There were no new Members of the Association.

6. Financial Update

The transition to on-line accounting and invoicing had been completed and used to raise invoices on 1st April 2014 for the leased areas. The lease fees were all now based on the "equal allocation" formula agreed at the Association meeting in March 2014.

There was a discussion of how to meet the costs associated with the issues arising from the proposed new Menai Strait West Order. The Association agreed that the issues currently under consideration were of a strategic nature, and could affect the shellfish industry throughout the Strait. It was agreed that these costs should therefore be met by the Association.

7. Developing the Fishery Order

James Wilson and Keith Andrews declared their interest in this agenda item.

A formal application to create two new leased areas had been submitted to the Minister on the 11th April. This had not yet been determined.

Rowland Sharp reported that he had been working on the Habitats Risk Assessment (HRA) document for the applications.

The Members of the Association hoped that the upcoming recess would not delay progress, and that the Minister would respond to the application in time for the applicants to start cultivation work during 2014.

8. Bangor Pier Proposals

There had been no more news of this project.

It was agreed that progress with the proposals for the pier should be kept under review, and that Bangor Town Council should be asked for news of the proposed schedule and scale of this development.

Action: Secretariat

9. Welsh Government Activity

The meeting received the report, and expressed frustration at the ongoing delays in progress with the Menai Strait West Fishery Order proposal. Concern was also expressed that the Environment Bill that had been identified by WG officers as the solution to the problems that were delaying progress with new Fishery Orders now seemed unlikely to resolve these issues.

The Association noted that there presently seems to be a mismatch between the Welsh Government's strategic objectives for shellfish aquaculture development and the current policy direction.

After some discussion it was agreed that the Association should take action to encourage the Minister to visit the Strait and hear about these issues at first hand.

Action: Chair

It was also agreed that efforts should be made to secure a meeting between WG lawyers and those representing the Association, with the aim of building a clearer understanding of legal issues.

Action: Chair

There was concern that WG had possibly misunderstood the role of MSFOMA with respect to Natura 2000 sites. It was agreed that a meeting should be

convened between MSFOMA and NRW to review these arrangements and check understanding of MSFOMA's roles and responsibilities.

Action: Chair

10.NW IFCA Activity

The report about NWIFCA proposals to establish a new Fishery Order in Morecambe Bay and to introduce a new vessel size byelaw was received.

Trevor Jones indicated that the NWIFCA was presently reviewing its options with respect to the proposed Morecambe Bay Fishery Order. Discussions were being held with Defra to evaluate the relative merits of managing the shellfisheries in Morecambe Bay using IFCA byelaws rather than a Fishery Order.

Trevor Jones reported that the vessel size byelaw had been discussed at the most recent meeting of the IFCA, and that Officers had been asked to draft a new proposal for consideration at the Authority's Technical, Scientific and Byelaws Sub-Committee meeting in August.

It was noted that there seemed to be very little sign of seed mussel in dredgeable areas in Morecambe Bay at present.

11. Fishery Management Issues

a) *Bonamia*

There was no further news on this issue.

b) Invasive Alien Species (IAS)

Didemnum vexillum

Rowland Sharp reported that Welsh Government had funded further eradication work in Holyhead in March. NRW were due to survey the area again in late 2014 and provide a status report to WG.

Funding is being sought for a full size isolation berth in Holyhead.

Japanese shore crab *Hemigrapsus sanguineas*

It was reported that a single individual has been found in South Wales. This species has not been found in North Wales, but is understood to have caused problems in the Wadden Sea.

12. Any Other Business

a) Correspondence

No correspondence other than that referred to in reports had been received.

b) Viral testing

James Wilson reported that he was due to meet with Public Health Wales to discuss the issue of viral transmission pathways. He was looking to build links with Dŵr Cymru and other public health bodies to promote an integrated approach to this. It was suggested that this could be a role for MSFOMA to take on in future.

c) Leased area boundaries

The Association was asked to verify the boundary of Area 2 in the Fishery Order with respect to recent fishing activity.

13. Date for next meeting

The next meeting is set for 10th October 2014 at 10am.