

Menai Strait Fishery Order Management Association

Meeting, 13th December 2018
FV *Mare Gratia*, Port Penrhyn

Minutes

Attendance

Members

Alan Winstone
James Wilson*
Keith Andrews*
Ioan Thomas
Lewis le Vay

Chair
Bangor Mussel Producers Ltd
Licensed hand pickers
Gwynedd County Council
Bangor University

Observers

Kim Mould
Rowland Sharp

BMWAG
Natural Resources Wales

Advisors

Jim Andrews

MSFOMA Secretariat

** These Members are also Directors of the Association*

1. Chair's announcements

The Chair noted that this meeting had been called as the AGM for the Association. It was not necessary to appoint a Chair, as the appointment is biennial. The key item for the AGM was to approve a budget for the coming FY.

It was noted that on this occasion the AGM agenda items were included with other business items. It was agreed that at future AGMs it would be more appropriate to have a separate agenda and minutes.

Action: Secretariat

2. Apologies

Trevor Jones
Iwan Huws
Bethan Jones
Janet Perry

Menai Strait (West)
Isle of Anglesey County Council
Welsh Government
Welsh Government

3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting that took place on 25th September 2018 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. Some items were discussed:-

Wales National Marine Plan

It was noted that following the period of consultation on this plan, Welsh Government are likely to remove the "Strategic Resource Areas" in this plan for all sectors.

It was understood that Welsh Governments and NRW have let a contract to gather evidence to support the approach of the WNMP to aquaculture and renewables.

5. Membership of the Association

Following the last meeting, the Secretariat had written to Bangor City Council to invite them to represent landowners' interests. The City Council had responded to indicate that this was not what they had envisaged.

Separately, Beaumaris Town Council had written to the Association in October expressing an interest in representing landowners, and nominating a Councillor to fulfil this role.

It was agreed that both Bangor City Council and Beaumaris Town Council should be invited to attend the next meeting of the Association as observers.

Action: Secretariat

It was noted that any changes to the membership of the Association would need to be addressed in the Articles of Association. It was agreed that the lawyers who had drawn up the Articles should be approached to make these amendments and to review the need for any other changes for clarification.

Action: Secretariat

The potential for conflicts of interest to arise was discussed. It was agreed that a register of meeting participants' interests should be compiled and that a declaration of interests should be made at each future meeting.

Action: Secretariat

6. Financial Update

The financial report was accepted.

It was agreed that a summary of management accounts should be presented at each quarterly meeting to enable the Association to monitor and manage the budget.

Action: James Wilson & Secretariat

7. Welsh Government Activity

a) Meetings of Fisheries Groups

Progress with the fisheries groups established by Welsh Government was reported by delegates who had attended these meetings as follows:-

- **Inshore Fisheries Groups** - are still suspended, so there have been no recent meetings.
- **Welsh Marine & Fisheries Advisory Group** - was due to meet in October 2018; no news of any progress.
- **Aquaculture Advisory Group** - a meeting was held in November and was attended by MSFOMA participants. James Wilson reported that he had taken the opportunity to discuss Fishery Orders with José Constantino at this meeting. There was a feeling of frustration that WG were not taking a leadership role nor using the AAG as a conduit for information.

The Association considered how it could help to encourage Welsh Government to adopt a more positive approach. There were felt to be opportunities to use the media and social media to raise awareness of the opportunities for developing aquaculture.

It was reported that Andy Olivier from CAMS has recently compiled a publication about the ecosystems services of bivalve cultivation. Lewis LeVay agreed to circulate this to the Association.

Action: Lewis LeVay & Secretariat

It was agreed that James Wilson should contact Seafish to explore opportunities for raising public awareness of the value of shellfish cultivation.

Action: James Wilson

It was further agreed that opportunities for the use of social media should be discussed at the next Association meeting, and that Andy Olivier should be invited to the meeting to provide advice.

Action: Secretariat, Lewis LeVay

8. NW IFCA Activity

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

It was noted that the NW IFCA had been preoccupied with cockle fishery issues recently.

There was some discussion of the impact that the sighting of 2 Chinese mitten crabs (*Eriocheir sinensis*) in the Walney Channel on seed mussel exports from NW England to Ireland. James Wilson and NRW had both recently examined this issue with respect to the movement of seed mussels from the Dee Estuary to the Menai Strait and considered that there are appropriate and effective ways to avoid translocations of this species with seed mussels.

It was noted that there had been very few seed mussels in Morecambe Bay this year. The pattern of poor recruitment was similar to that reported from time to time during the 1970s in Morecambe Bay by Peter Dare from MAFF at that time.

Kim Mould noted that good progress was being made to build a constructive relationship between the Menai Strait operators and the Morecambe Bay hand gatherers.

9. Menai Strait East Fishery Order

The report on this Fishery Order was received and discussed.

a) Renewal of the Fishery Order

The meeting considered the need for engagement with stakeholders as part of the process of facilitating the renewal of this Fishery Orders. It was noted that the previous meeting had resolved that an "engagement plan" should be drawn up, but that other events had delayed progress.

Several opportunities for engagement were discussed:-

- Caernarfon Harbour Trust Marine Advisory Committee - it was noted that this Committee has a wide membership and that it would be useful to give a presentation about renewal of the Fishery Order to it.
- Beaumaris Pier User Group - the Chair and Secretariat had been invited to attend the December meeting of this Group but had been unable to. It was felt that it would be useful to attend the next meeting.
- Publicity Opportunities that MSFOMA could be present at were discussed:-
 - Seafood Event - the owners of Dylans in Menai Bridge were holding a seafood event on 18th May.
 - Bangor Seafood Festival - this was founded this year, and is expected to take in late September.
 - Beaumaris Food Festival - this was founded in 2013 and is very popular, it takes place in early September.

It was agreed that the Chair, Secretariat and representatives of the Association should make arrangements to attend these events and also to organise meetings with stakeholders.

Action: Secretariat, Chair

b) Lease fees

There was a discussion of the options presented for altering the fees charged for leases. It was noted that the Association's overheads could be affected by the outcome of the application for the Menai Strait (West) Fishery Order. The cost of renewing that Order was presently being met by the Association and would be recovered from the lessees if the Order is made.

It was agreed that no decision should be taken on the lease fees charged until there is greater clarity on what is likely to happen with the renewal of the Menai Strait (West) Fishery Order.

c) Code of Good Practice

Work on the review of the code of good practice was still ongoing. In particular, NRW and James Wilson had been discussing how to combine a recent "traffic light" list of Invasive Non Native Species (INNS) produced by NRW with the existing Code. The main challenge for this centred on the Pacific oyster (*Crassostrea gigas*) which is both an INNS and a cultivate species in the western Menai Strait.

It was agreed that NRW and the Association should continue to work on this.

Action: James Wilson, Rowland Sharpe, Secretariat

d) Community Fund

No response had been received from the Crown Estate about the proposal to set up a Community Fund. It was felt that setting up such a fund in collaboration with the Crown Estate would help to establish a positive and mutually beneficial relationship.

It was agreed that the Association should determine who is responsible for Community Funds at the Crown Estate and make an approach directly to them rather than via the existing points of contact.

Action: Secretariat

10. Menai Strait West

The report was received. It was noted that despite the concessions made by the Association at its last meeting no tangible progress had been made. The Association expressed its dismay at this.

James Wilson reported that the WFFO had questioned the Cabinet Secretary about the lack of progress at a public meeting in November. She had expressed her frustration about this after the meeting.

Following discussions at the Aquaculture Advisory Group (reported above) there was a feeling from the industry that there is some fundamental resistance to Fishery Orders from certain WG officials. There is no clear reason for this. The lack of progress with the Menai West Fishery Order and other Fishery Orders in Wales is currently thwarting the development of shellfish aquaculture.

It was noted that because of the delay in progress it would be appropriate to review the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Fishery Order to ensure it remains current.

Action: Rowland Sharp & Secretariat

It was agreed that liaison with WG officials should be maintained in an effort to stimulate progress with this application.

Action: Secretariat

11. Funding proposals

Lewis LeVay provided an update on the funding proposals being progressed by the University:-

- Menai Offshore Subsurface Shellfish Systems (MOSSS) - funding for this project was confirmed in October using EMFF funds. The project will run for 3 years. The project will provide funding for ongoing trials at the pilot test site near Puffin Island and will also fund modelling and surveys around Wales to identify areas suitable for full scale production.
- Developing an Assurance Scheme for Shellfish and Human Health (DASSHH) - this project has been approved with funding from EMFF. It is looking at potential for use of environmental indicators in catchments to inform adaptive classification of shellfish harvesting areas. The University is working in partnership with Seafish and the Food Standards Agency on this project. Field work is due to be carried out in Cornwall, with parallel studies in Wales (Conwy/Menai Strait) and Northern Ireland.
- Shellfish Centre workshop - this workshop was held in early December. Over 50 people attended and were asked to identify opportunities, constraints and research needs for the development of Welsh shellfisheries. A report from the workshop is due to be published in January 2019.
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12. Fishery Management Issues

a) Coastal / marine developments

i. Bangor Pier

No news.

ii. Dickies Boatyard Development

There had been no further consultations about this project.

iii. Sand in the dock

A further letter had been sent to the Penrhyn Estate but had not been acknowledged. The depth of the dock was decreasing and this was limiting the time when vessels were able to work. It was felt that it would be worth contacting the company working on the dock about this (thought to be TNG Quarries / Derbyshire Aggregates).

Action: Secretariat

It was noted that if this problem is not addressed it may be appropriate to raise it as a potential Marine Licensing issue.

b) Environmental / health issues

i. *Bonamia*

No additional news.

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

No additional news.

iii. *Norovirus*

No additional news.

13. Any Other Business

Kim Mould mentioned that there had been some seed mussels at Caernarfon Bar this year, the first settlement for several years. Some of these were still there, and there had been no signs of starfish predation yet.

Deepdock reported that they had been buying some seed mussels from hand gatherers working on the English side of the Dee Estuary.

14. Date for next meeting (and AGM)

13th March 2019, 10am.

It was agreed that meetings for the coming year should take place quarterly, and that suitable meeting dates should be agreed in advance.

Action: Secretariat

Summary of Actions

Item	Action	Responsibility
1.	Invite both Bangor City Council and Beaumaris Town Council to attend the next MSFOMA meeting.	Secretariat
2.	Ensure that AGM agenda and minutes are separate from other agenda items and minutes at future AGMs.	Secretariat
3.	Approach lawyers to make amendments to Articles to allow for wider membership.	Secretariat
4.	Present management accounts at future Association meetings.	JW, Secretariat
5.	Circulate publication about ecosystem services provided by bivalve cultivation.	LLV, Secretariat.
6.	Contact Seafish to explore opportunities for raising public awareness of the value of shellfish cultivation.	James Wilson
7.	Invite Andy Olivier to next MSFOMA meeting to provide advice on use of social media.	LLV, JW
8.	Code of Good Practice - this to be revised to include update on INNS & changes to legislation.	JW, RS, Secretariat
9.	Community Fund - write to Crown Estate for advice again, provide update to next meeting.	JW, Secretariat
10.	Menai West Habitats Regulations Assessment - revise this to ensure that it remains current	RS, Secretariat
11.	Menai West - continue to liaise with WG officials to expedite progress.	Secretariat
12.	Sand in Dock - MSFOMA to contact aggregate operator about this issue.	Secretariat
13.	Date for next meeting - 13 th March 2019	Secretariat
14.	Agree dates for quarterly meetings in 2019	Secretariat