

Dorset and East Devon Fisheries Local Action Group

Board meeting Minutes

Date: 1st August 2017
Venue: Safe Wise, Weymouth
Time: 18:00 – 20:00

Attendance

FLAG Programme Staff (Non-voting)	Dorset Wildlife Trust
Quest Marine Ltd	Weymouth and Portland Fisherman's Association
Dorset County Council	East Devon Fisherman's Association
Weymouth and Portland Borough Council	Purbeck District Council
Weymouth Harbour	Natural England
Devon and Severn Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority (IFCA)	West Bay Fishermen's Association
Southern IFCA	Resort Marketing Ltd
CEFAS	
Swanage Fishermen's Association	

Apologies

SeaFish
Marine Management Organisation

1. Welcome and brief introductions
2. Last meeting's minutes

The minutes from the last meeting were agreed by the board.

There were three actions from the previous meeting:

1. FLAG Board members to let FLAG staff know of any suitable locations for the Animateur to work from
2. FLAG Staff to ensure that independent appraisals of projects and FLAG financial updates are circulated to the Board a week prior to the Board meeting
3. FLAG Staff to ensure that relevant photographs etc are available for review at each Board meeting that involves technical projects

All three actions have been completed.



4. Finances

The FLAG financial update was circulated to the Board before the meeting. The figures are subject to approval of previous project funding by the MMO. The MMO are yet to approve the FLAG programme's management and administration costs and so a claim has not been submitted. Exact costs will be updated to the Board at the next meeting.

5. Update on FLAG work

a. Programme Timescales

Due to the uncertainty of Brexit, it is now recommended that projects finish in December 2019 instead of March 2020. This will allow for time to wrap up any outstanding claims and finish the FLAG programme. This means there are 19 months for the FLAG to commit money and a further eight months for projects to finish and submit claims. However the MMO did add that this is a 'grey area' until Brexit plans are clearer.

b. Applications to date

The three projects which were approved at the last meeting have not yet been approved by the MMO. There were some technical issues, which the FLAG staff are working to resolve, and it is expected that the projects will be approved shortly. As the FLAG programme staff become more familiar with the intricacies of the programme it is expected that this process will become quicker.

Application ENG2175 regarding replacement of pots that was deferred at the last meeting has been withdrawn by the applicant.

The Mobile Training Equipment project that was directed to core has applied directly.

Five projects will be discussed at this meeting and there are a further five at Expression of Interest stage that will progress to full application as soon as possible. There have been a number of other enquires and interest in the fund and once any new Expressions of Interest are received these will be circulated to the Board for review.

c. New Article available for FLAG projects

Projects submitted to FLAG must have had specific measurable economic benefits such as creating or safeguarding jobs or businesses. DEFRA has now opened a new pathway for projects that do not have direct measureable economic outputs but still contribute towards boosting economic growth and have other valuable benefits that align with the LDS. These projects will be assessed on a case by case basis and will still have to show meaningful and measureable benefits. Examples of such projects are:

- Schools outreach programmes
- Diversification into fisheries related industries
 - Purchasing of equipment to allow fishermen to repair marine engines
 - Pot making
 - Boat Repair



- Promotional and raising of awareness campaigns with a strong link to fisheries

These kinds of projects were previously very difficult to fund, but with the opening of this new Article it should hopefully prove more straightforward.

d. FLAG Board Project Selection

To date the FLAG staff have not been refining the projects which are taken through the FLAG to allow the Board to see the range of projects that can be funded. Now that the board are more familiar with the types of project. However, the FLAG programme staff now feel that projects should be refined to allow FLAG to focus on larger projects or projects that bring benefits to multiple individuals. For example, projects such as the schools outreach programme or aquaculture projects that would help to develop the industry within the FLAG area. **This proposal was discussed by the FLAG Board** and is summarised below:

- There was concern that if only larger projects were to be consider by FLAG it may lead to difficulties in committing to spend the fund by December 2019.
- It was suggested that by only dealing with the larger projects it may remove the community element from FLAG.
- FLAG programme staff pointed out that, because of their nature, larger projects will need more discussion. The Board was reminded that the FLAG can only consider projects with a total project cost of less than £100,000.
- There was a discussion at the last meeting regarding the funding of replacement fishing gear as there was a concern that it may cause competition between fishermen locally
- It was suggested that gear should be considered by FLAG as the Board is familiar with local communities and is able to make a more informed decision when compared to the MMO which is distanced.
- There was a feeling from some Board members that the replacement of fishing gear under a grant scheme was not effectively monitored by the MMO and there was concern that replacement gear was not properly collected. This could lead to an increase in fishing effort in an already crowded area. A board member asked if the FLAG could assist the MMO in ensuring gear was surrendered as EMFF and FLAG funding cannot be seen to increase fishing effort. The FLAG programme staff pointed out that this was beyond the remit of FLAG and is the MMOs jurisdiction.
- A board member suggested that since funding has become available for replacement gear manufactures are struggling to cope with demand which has increased delivery time for anyone who wishes to replace gear and shows the increase in demand.
- There was a general feeling that projects regarding safety equipment should be considered by FLAG and projects regarding replacement of fishing gear should be directed to the core fund.
- Concerns were raised that there might be an influx of similar projects that could drain FLAG funds quickly and this may not align with the FLAG purpose and LDS.



VOTE: Should the FLAG board consider projects for the replacement of fishing gear?

RESULT: In favour: 2 Against: 12.

Replacement fishing gear will *not* be considered by the FLAG board but, when approached by applicants, FLAG programme staff will assist with the application to the main core fund. The Board still wishes to consider applications related to Health and Safety.

A Board member asked if the Board can be kept up to date with any such application. A list will be made public by the MMO towards the end of the EMFF programme, but FLAG programme staff will update the Board when possible although the staff may not be aware of all core applications

ACTION: FLAG programme staff to update the Board with details of any successful applications to core fund that they deal with for replacement fishing gear.

e. Date of next meeting

The short timescale between the previous meeting and this meeting has meant that the FLAG programme staff have found it difficult to fully develop each project for consideration by the Board. The time to assess each project and the supporting documentation can vary depending on changes that need to be made or further evidence required and for this reason the programme staff suggested moving the date of the next meeting from September 5th to October 10th 2017. This will give time to hopefully develop some larger and more diverse projects to bring forward. There were no objections from the Board.

f. EPIRB and PLB clarification

At the previous meeting there was confusion amongst some Board members regarding the differences between EPIRB's (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon) and PLB's (Personal Locator Beacon). The Chair provided the Board with details of a group project they are working on centred on EPIRB's and PLB's and asked the Board for their general feelings on this type of project. A board member commented that the larger size of EPIRB's can be problematic on smaller scale fishing vessels as they are already very crowded with equipment and fishing gear.

Addendum to meeting: Personal Location Beacons work in exactly the same way as EPIRB's by sending a coded message on the 406 MHz distress frequency which is relayed via the Cospas-Sarsat global satellite system. However, there are a number of differences between them.

PLB's are designed to be carried on the person so they are much smaller, some such as the 'Fast Find' are not much larger than the size of a mobile phone. PLBs are designed to be used anywhere in the world, on the sea and also on land. Some don't float but may come with an additional floatation sleeve which they should be carried in.

PLB's, once activated, will transmit for a minimum of 24 hours; while the battery life on an EPIRB is at least double (a minimum of 48 hours). An EPIRB is registered to a vessel, whereas a PLB is registered to a person. This means that if you are crewing a vessel and you switch to a new vessel the PLB is still correctly registered; however, if you have an EPIRB and buy a new vessel you will need to re-register it when installing in your new boat. (www.epirb.com/difference_between_epirbs_plbs.php)

6. Project Discussions and Scoring

Each project was independently appraised prior to the meeting and these were circulated to the Board for review. The scoring and Board discussion for each project is documented in the individual FLAG Application Appraisal form. Project details will be made public once they are approved for funding by the MMO.

The applications discussed at this meeting were:

- I. **ENG 2179** – Dorset Wildlife Trust, Southern Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority and Natural England declared interest.
 - **A vote was taken to send to core EMFF fund. Application referred to core EMFF.**
- II. **ENG 2178**
 - **A vote was taken to support this project in principle .However a decision was not made as the Board wishes to see further information.**
- III. **ENG 2213** – Swanage Fishermen’s Association declared interest
 - **A vote was taken to recommend this project for FLAG funding**
- IV. **ENG 2197**
 - **A vote was taken to recommend this project for FLAG funding. The condition that the applicant must undertake Seafish Radar training was attached to the Board’s decision.**
- V. **ENG 2262**
 - **A vote was taken to recommend this project for FLAG funding**

7. Any other Business

A board member thanked the FLAG programme staff for inviting them to present and hear evidence at the South West Rural Productivity Commission Evidence Review Panel recently to highlight the fishing and aquaculture sector to the commission. The commission are a partnership of four Local Enterprise Partnerships in the South West to explore the issues around rural productivity and growth.

The FLAG Animateur thanked the Board for their input regarding roaming working locations through the FLAG area. The Animateur has three locations arranged

- Weymouth Harbour Side Café
- The Fisherman’s College, The Cobb Harbour, Lyme Regis
- The Swanage Angling Club Club House, Swanage
- Update: West Bay Harbour Masters Office

The Animateur will circulate to the board a schedule of when and where they will be working when they have arrange a fourth location which is likely to be around the West Bay area.



A board member asked if FLAG can support project related to increasing brand visibility in Dorset and East Devon. The FLAG programme staff confirmed this is possible and a board member also pointed out the benefits of the Direct Seafood brand working out of the Lyme Bay Reserve. While there have been some teething problems with the scheme over all it has been welcomed by the fisherman involved with it.

The FLAG Co-ordinator advised the Board that there have clearly been many projects related to infrastructure, vessel and health and safety improvements and the FLAG Programme staff will also now focus on the larger, more added value types of projects such as aquaculture, collaborative working and adding value to catch in line with the five priorities of the Local Development Strategy. This will involve reaching out to businesses further up the supply chain and within the aquaculture sector.

8. **Date of Next meeting**

The next meeting will be on October 10th at 18:00hrs at Safe Wise in Weymouth.