

Dorset and East Devon Fisheries Local Action Group

Board meeting Minutes

Date: 11 June 2018

Venue: Safewise, Weymouth

Time: 18:00 – 20:00

In attendance:

Dorset Coast Forum	Dorset County Council	Weymouth and Portland Fishermen's and Licensed Boatmen's Association
Marine Management Organisation	Quest Marine	West Bay Fishermen's Association
CEFAS	Weymouth and Portland Borough Council	Weymouth Harbour Authority
East Devon Fishermen's Association (Seaton and Axmouth Branch)	Aquafish Solutions Ltd (Guest)	

Apologies:

Purbeck District Council
The Fishing College
Sea Fish
Native Marine Centre Ltd
Dorset Wildlife Trust
East Devon Fishermen's Association (Beer Branch)
Southern Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority

1. Welcome and introductions

The chair welcomed the FLAG members to the meeting. The chair also apologised to the Board for the late notice of the postponement of the meeting that was scheduled for late May. This was because the meeting was not quorate.

2. Last meetings minutes

There were three actions from the last meeting:

- I. **FLAG board members to advise Martin who may be suitable to speak with at each port to identify potential projects and of new locations that Martin can work from.**
The board has not advised Martin of suitable contacts at each port but Martin is now working at Axmouth harbour on the first Wednesday of the month.

ACTION: FLAG Board members to advise Martin of key contacts at ports within the FLAG area.



- II. **Rhiannon to get in touch with suggested interview panel members.** The interviews for the Aquaculture Development Officer were held in May with a selection of FLAG board members present.
- III. **FLAG officers to keep board up to date with details of other funding application where appropriate.** There is a funding application that is currently being developed relating to the aquaculture sector. Further details will be given to the board when appropriate.

3. FLAG work update

- **Projects** – Since the launch of FLAG in March 2017, 40 Expressions of Interest have been submitted. 27 of these have been developed into full applications. The FLAG board has approved 19 projects and 13 of these projects have received offer letters from the MMO. One project has been completed and claimed, while a further four projects are in the process of claiming. Three more projects are being presented at this meeting and there are two projects in the process of completing the online application.
 - A board member asked for a hard end date for the FLAG fund.
 - Rhiannon advised the board that we are still working towards full commitment of the funds by March 2019.
 - A board member raised concerns that if certain projects being considered at this meeting were successful, they had the potential to spawn further projects that may take time to develop. Would there be time for that to happen?
 - Rhiannon advised the board that claims for projects can still run through to December 2019, so long as the project is submitted prior to March 2019.
- **MMO EMFF Status Update** – The core EMFF programme had £45 million to spend when it was launched. £27 million has now been committed to projects and there are £16 million worth of projects that have had offer letter issued. This leaves approximately £2 million left. The MMO have advised there are a number of projects currently at application stage and they are currently expecting an overspend. However, they also expect around 10 – 15% of projects not to submit a full application. The MMO are currently negotiating with DEFRA regarding extra funding to keep the programme open for as long as possible.
- **English FLAG's Collective spend** – The six English FLAG's were allocated £2.5 million between them. Currently, the collective spend is £1 million. The Dorset and East Devon FLAG is in a strong position and it is anticipated that we will spend the full allocation by March 2019. The MMO have advised us that there is potential for an extra source of funding that FLAG's could bid for but there would need to be projects ready to go for this to be successful with any bid made.
- **Management and Administration Claim** – The MMO have still not paid either of the M&A claims that have been submitted although Rhiannon is working hard to provide the extra evidence the MMO have requested.



- **GDPR** – The board were reminded that, if they haven't already done so, they need to give consent to continue to receive e-mail updates from the FLAG. Martin will chase the outstanding responses.

ACTION: Martin to chase remaining FLAG board members' responses to GDPR.

- **Seafarers UK and Wyvern Credit Union** – The bid to Wyvern Credit Union has been successful. A scheme to create a bridging loan service for applicants to EMFF or FLAG has been set up. This scheme will provide applicants with vital funds for projects when they are unable to meet upfront costs themselves.
- **Holderness Coast FLAG networking event** – Rhiannon and Martin spent two days in North Yorkshire with the five other English FLAG's last month. The event was a good opportunity to share best practice and see some of the successes the Holderness FLAG has had under EFF and EMFF.
- **Fishermen's Health Needs** – While in Bridlington the FLAG officers were given details from a successful project looking at the health needs of fishermen and their families. Martin has had some promising initial conversations with the Fishermen's Hospital who are keen to replicate the project in Dorset in conjunction with the Public Health Department. Martin asked the board if, in their opinion, would be a need for this in the FLAG area.
 - A board member commented that it would be good idea to produce a flyer with the information on that could be circulated in ports as people often don't want to talk openly about their health
 - A board member commented that a similar project visited their workplace and it was very successful

ACTION: FLAG officers to design a flyer about health needs to be circulated in ports in the FLAG area

- **Aquaculture courses** – Martin has had some very encouraging meetings with a local higher education college who are keen to develop a level three (BTEC) course centred around aquaculture. This course could provide much needed skills for the sector locally.
 - A board member commented that this type of course could fit well with the local authority's apprenticeship scheme
- **UK FLAG Managing Authority conference** – Dorset and East Devon FLAG will host the UK Managing Authority conference in late September. This three-day event will see all FLAG's across the UK and each of the devolved administrations managing bodies visit Dorset and will give us the chance to highlight the work we have been doing and the Dorset coast in general.
- **Meet the buyer event** – The FLAG Meet the Buyer event took place at Hix Academy in late May. The event was not as well attended as was hoped and therefore Martin will be out in towns in the FLAG area talking to seafood restaurants, seafood processors and fish and chip shops to raise the profile of FLAG with this sector.
 - A board member commented that a project related to creating a hub for seafood sellers would help as, after a day's fishing, fishers just want to get home as soon as possible.



- A board member commended the work that a local fish monger is doing in Swanage by trying to expand their product range and buying less popular seafood from local fishers to help support them throughout the year.
- **Board ideas for potential projects for the upcoming year** – Rhiannon asked the board for their input for different projects which they think would be good for FLAG to develop. Projects should align to the following themes:
 - **Research** - Fisheries
 - **Issues** that need resolving
 - **Community** help, needs or services
 - **Seafood** processing and supply chain enhancement

Rhiannon also advised the board that the third year of the FLAG would be mainly involved with project monitoring and evaluation but it would be useful to keep the board together in some form to keep the valuable connections and networking opportunities open. An e-mail will be sent to the board to ask for their feedback from the way the FLAG has been administered, in the event of further fisheries funding being secured post BREXIT.

- **Additional Board members** – As two board members have recently left the board, Rhiannon asked for the Board’s thoughts on inviting two new board members to replace the organisations who have left.
 - A board member suggested that it might be wise to look for one industry representative and one non-industry, to help keep the balance of the board
 - A board member asked if there was a maximum number of board member permitted. Rhiannon advised there is not a maximum number of board members.
 - A number of board members made suggestions of suitable organisations who may want to join the board.

ACTION: Rhiannon to contact suitable organisation and invite them to join the FLAG board.

4. Finances

- The FLAG has committed approximately 50% of the original allocation.
- The three projects for consideration at this meeting will add roughly 10% to the committed funds if approved.
- There is a further 12% currently at EOI stage and the FLAG remains on target to be fully committed by March 2019.
- The MMO are yet to approve the review of the Local Development Strategy
 - A board member asked for clarification on who set the funds for each priority? Rhiannon advised that these were set by the FLAG programme staff and approved by the MMO before the FLAG was awarded.
 - Rhiannon proposed a second review of the Local Development Strategy at the September FLAG board meeting.
 - A board member commented that regardless of where the money is spent the MMO will see it as a success if it is spent. Rhiannon agreed with the



board member but also reminded the board that we are working towards the LDS, which is the basis upon that the FLAG was awarded.

5. Project discussions and scoring

There were three projects presented for review by the Board at this meeting. Each project was independently appraised prior to the meeting and this was 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.

- I. **ENG 3146** Quest Marine Ltd. declared an interest
 - **The applicant presented to the Board**
 - **A vote was taken to approve this project for FLAG funding**
- II. **ENG 3167** Dorset Coast Forum declared an interest.
 - **The preferred supplier presented to the board**
 - **A vote was taken to approve this project for FLAG funding**
- III. **ENF 3168**
 - **A vote was taken to approve this project for FLAG funding**

6. Any other business and date of next meeting

- Rhiannon advised the board that she had been told by some board members they will find it difficult to make any more meetings over the summer because of other commitments. So, she proposed postponing the next meeting until after the summer and holding the next board meeting in early September.
 - A board member commented they didn't believe this would be fair on the two projects in the pipeline and that the next meeting should go ahead as planned in six weeks' time.
 - Rhiannon reminded the board that project decisions can be made via conference call if need be.
 - A board member suggested moving the time of the meeting to start at 19:00 as this may help fishers make the meeting during the summer.
 - The board generally agreed a later start would be beneficial to attendance.
- A board member advised the board that DEFRA are running a consultation about the third tranche of Marine Conservation Zone designation. Several board members asked for the information to be passed to them.
 - The board member advised they will forward the information to the FLAG officers to distribute to the board

ACTION: FLAG officers to forward DEFRA consultation information to board members.

- The next meeting will be Tuesday 31st July at 1900 at SafeWise in Weymouth.