

Filmed oral evidence sessions - outline of event

Previous engagement with the fishing industry and feedback from Authority members has reflected on the challenge of successfully engaging with the fishing industry and wider stakeholders in the development of fisheries management. On such a complex workstream it is important to try and capture as many thoughts and ideas as possible about the cockle fisheries before we start the detailed process of developing management options.

To try and achieve this we propose running recorded oral evidence sessions, where evidence can be given to the Authority following the same broad structure as the questionnaire. There would be specific sessions run over 2 days at the Thurrock Hotel (20-21 October) and participants would be invited to book a slot (using Eventbrite) to present their evidence on a first come first served basis (50 places available in total). Once a participant has booked a slot an information pack would be sent to them outlining the questions the Authority members will ask as well as the specific arrangements for the day (potentially any COVID-19 requirements).

Hearing the evidence would be a small group of Authority members who would ask the series of questions (3-4 questions) this would then be followed by an opportunity for the participant to address the Authority members regarding any other issues relating to the current or future management of cockles in the district. Each participant would have a time limit for their evidence to allow everyone the same opportunity.

The evidence would be recorded and filmed (considering GDPR requirements) which would create a true and accurate account of each participants' views and allow people not able to attend the session to hear the views expressed. The evidence given could then potentially be edited to produce a film that captures the range of different opinions of stakeholders. The film can then be played to Authority members at the November Authority meeting and act as a touch stone for the whole process.