

From: Will Wright, Chief Officer Kent and Essex IFCA

To: Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority – 30 November 2017

Subject: **Native Oyster permit byelaw update**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Summary: Following on from updates at previous meetings, the paper updates the Authority as to the progress in developing a Flexible Native Oyster permit byelaw and makes recommendations as to the wording of the byelaw.

Recommendations:

1. Members are asked to **APPROVE** the **RECOMMENDATIONS** of the Technical Panel (Appendix 1).
2. Members are asked to **APPROVE** the holding of an additional Technical Panel meeting to review the legal wording of the byelaw, and comment and input into a draft byelaw impact assessment document.

Consultation feedback

Since the last meeting, a written consultation document has been distributed (details of distribution below) resulting in 17 responses to the IFCA. Overall the written consultation process has proved to be very useful and the level of engagement and input from the replies was exceptional (all replies on KEIFCA website). The replies have helped inform and positively shape the byelaw and thoroughly examined the proposals put forward in the consultation document, whilst also providing additional options that had previously not been considered.

Distribution of consultation documents

- Printed copies (left in public places)
- Printed copies distributed by Essex fishery officers
- Printed copies sent to stakeholders that provided address (48)
- Consultation information on KEIFCA website
- The ebulletin (270 people)
- Public KEIFCA ¼ meeting (Jan, May and Sept 2017)/ phone officers

Technical Panel consideration of the feedback

Using the initial options put forward in the consultation document, as well as options that had been proposed as part of the consultation replies, the Technical Panel worked through the questions posed in the consultation document. The Technical Panel used both the written replies as well as heard oral evidence and opinion from local stakeholders. The meeting felt very collaborative and although some of the issues discussed were difficult, complex and sometimes emotive, considerable progress was made and there is now an agreed set of recommendations (see Appendix 1) that can be translated into the legal wording of a byelaw.

Next steps

Flowing from the meeting there are now two significant steps/issues to address. The first is to discuss in more detail the location and the management of the restoration box (KEIFCA are facilitating a meeting between NE and the local fishing industry/oystermen) and the underlying approach and objectives aiding the recovery of Native Oysters. A meeting has been arranged on the 11th December in West Mersea to address these issues.

The second step is to run an additional Technical Panel (run in the same manner as the previous Technical Panel on 30th October) to review the legal wording of the byelaw, and comment and input into a draft byelaw impact assessment document. Based on the collaborative nature of the previous Technical Panel and the progress made; it is felt that by taking additional time to go through this final detail we can continue to work productively with the local community and wider stakeholders to reach a conclusion that people can hopefully be happy with or at worst live with. The hope is that by spending more time now we can save time and money during the statutory consultation phase. In order to allow time for more stakeholders to attend to make these final recommendations, it is proposed to arrange for a Technical Panel meeting to be held in West Mersea in the week of 5 February 2018.

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