

By: Assistant Chief Fishery Officer

To: Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority –
16 September 2019

Subject: New patrol vessel – Rigid-hulled Inflatable Boat (RIB)

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Summary: Report on the procurement of the new patrol RIB

Recommendation: This report is for **COMMENT** and **NOTING**

At the January 2019 Authority meeting, Members approved the purchase of a new Rigid-hulled Inflatable Boat (RIB) to replace the ageing KEIFCA patrol vessel 'Blue Jacket' which was purchased second-hand in 2016 as a stop-gap measure whilst the patrol vessel 'Nerissa' (our 17m Ramsgate-based catamaran) was being built. 'Blue Jacket' has proven its worth many times over and has brought a new capability to KEIFCA with regards to sea-based enforcement.

Following the meeting, an order was placed with Ribcraft on 14th February for the new vessel, a 7.8m open RIB with twin 175hp Suzuki outboard engines. The electronics package and ancillaries are as fitted to other RIBs which have recently been ordered by, or delivered to, other IFCA's by Ribcraft. The new vessel is as close to 'off-the-peg' as is possible with a patrol vessel build, ensuring that KEIFCA is not creating a new type of vessel and breaking new ground as we have done previously with other new vessels.

Unfortunately, over the summer, 'Blue Jacket' has shown its age and has had to have major engine work carried out. Whilst this was unforeseen, it does support the Authority's decision to replace the vessel, especially with one with twin outboard engines to reduce the likelihood of the vessel becoming immobile at sea.

The new vessel will obviously require a name, and following conversations with all of the officers and staff, plus more than a little research and work, the name that all of the officers would like to apply to the vessel, subject to MCA approval, is 'Vigilant'.

The vessel is due to start its build in the second week of September when the hull is released from the mould, and delivery is expected to be before the next

Authority meeting, probably at the end of November. A new owner will then be sought for 'Blue Jacket'.

As reported to Members previously, EMFF funding is available for the vessel and all of the relevant documents have been submitted. The amount we will receive is yet to be confirmed but is likely to be in the region of £21,000.

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