

By: Assistant Chief IFCO

To: Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority –
30 November 2020

Subject: Local engagement with Crouch Harbour Authority

Classification Unrestricted

Summary:

This report provides members with an overview of planned engagement work with Crouch Harbour Authority

Recommendations:

This report is for **NOTING** only.

The Essex coastline is notable for its proliferation of privately owned seabed, especially in the rivers. KEIFCA and Crouch Harbour Authority (CHA) have for some time been in dialogue regarding management of fisheries resources within the areas which are in CHA ownership, which comprises the majority of the River Crouch and some of the creeks.

In 2013, the Blackwater, Crouch, Roach and Colne Estuaries Marine Conservation Zone was introduced by Government. KEIFCA have spent the last seven years working with the local fishing industry and other stakeholders to introduce management for the site which resulted in the Authority making the Blackwater, Crouch, Roach and Colne Estuaries MCZ Native Oyster Permit Byelaw in 2018. This byelaw manages the public areas of the MCZ for the purposes of feature conservation, with a particular focus on the confluence of the rivers Blackwater and Colne as well as the open sea area, given the importance of these to native oyster recovery as well as aquaculture.

Given the overlapping responsibilities of KEIFCA and CHA with regards fishery management in these areas, it is intended to continue development of the relationship between KEIFCA and CHA in order to further closer ties within the community, especially with regards to monitoring of fishing activities within the MCZ and the other MPAs which cover the Essex rivers.

The aim is to develop a clear shared understanding of spatial management in the river and develop clear and comprehensive boundary charts that can help inform management as we move forwards.

Officers also intend to explore options to assist CHA in their management of sea fisheries resources (particularly shellfish) which is present on seabed/land which is in CHA ownership. This may include providing advice with regards to regulatory measures such as Several Orders as well as compliance and enforcement assistance.

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