

ANGUS COUNCIL

INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE – 24 NOVEMBER 2009

INSHORE FISHERIES GROUP FOR SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND (IFG)

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

ABSTRACT: This report outlines the progress made to establish an Inshore Fisheries Group for South-East Scotland from the border with England up to River North Esk and recommends that the Council continues its support.

1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- (i) note the content of this report;
 - (ii) continue with support for the now-formed Inshore Fisheries Group for South-East Scotland; and
 - (iii) Authorise, with delegated authority, the Head of Economic Development and Environmental & Consumer Protection to award match funding up to a value of £10,000 for individual associated projects.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Committee is referred to Article 23 of the minute of meeting of the Infrastructure Services Committee of 24 November 2005, which records that the Committee agreed:-
- (i) to note the content of the report;
 - (ii) to support the establishment of a South-East Scotland Inshore Fisheries Group; and
 - (iii) to instruct submission of a further Report in the event of the Council's financial support for the appointment of a South-East Scotland Inshore Fisheries Development Co-ordinator to work on behalf of the relevant local authorities.

3. PROGRESS

- 3.1 Progress has been made since the last Committee report in November 2005. The Strategic Framework for Inshore Fisheries for Scotland, issued early in 2005 was reviewed by the Scottish Government in 2007 and substantially left unchanged.
- 3.2 Inshore Fisheries Groups (IFG) are currently being established. A local co-ordinator for the South-East Scotland IFG was appointed earlier in 2009 and an Angus Council officer attended the inaugural meeting of the South-East Scotland IFG in September 2009.

- 3.3 There are 12 IFGs for Scotland to cover the coastline of the Scottish mainland and islands. The first pilot IFGs, to be in operation are: the Outer Hebrides, the Clyde, and the Sout East. The North-West, the Moray Firth and the Small Isles and Mull IFGs will follow shortly.
- 3.4 The Inshore Fisheries Groups (IFG) aims are now two-fold; to improve the management of Scotland's inshore fisheries out to six nautical miles; and to give commercial inshore fishermen (owners, skippers and crew) a strong voice in wider marine management developments. IFGs are to produce realistic fisheries management plans for their areas that fit with the wider strategic goals of sustainable stocks, a healthy marine environment and a profitable fishing sector that supports strong coastal communities.

4. STRUCTURE MEMBERSHIP AND ROLE

- 4.1 Membership of IFGs is voluntary and is open to owners, skippers and crew of Scottish and UK registered vessels. Each IFG will have an Executive Committee to drive its work. These committees will be made up of commercial fishing interests drawn from IFG area Fisheries Associations and spokespersons of fishermen that operate in the area but that are not members of an Association. The representatives have been elected by their members to sit on the Executive Committees.
- 4.2 Independent chairpersons chair the Executive Committee meetings and the IFG as a whole. Each area will be supported by a local co-ordinator, funded by the Scottish Government.
- 4.3 The Executive Committee are supported by an Advisory Group, which sits alongside the Executive Committee. The role of the Advisory Group is to provide advice and guidance when setting up new fisheries or improving the management of existing ones.
- 4.4 Meetings of the Advisory Groups will consequently be called only as required. The Advisory Groups are made up of representatives of, for example, Marine Scotland (Fisheries Research Services and Compliance Services), Scottish National Heritage (SNH), Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and of local authorities with coastlines within the Area.

5. THE SOUTH-EAST INSHORE FISHERIES GROUP(IFG)

- 5.1 The South-East area covers the coastline of 250 miles from Berwick to Montrose, taking in the Firths of Forth and Tay. Within the area, there are 24 ports and harbours used by over 200 registered/licensed fishing vessels, mainly Creels. Revenue generated by these vessels in 2008 totalled over £10million (£10,180,250) of which 59% were Nephrop, 33% Creels (lobster and crabs) and the remaining 8% Shell-fish (e.g. scallops, whelks and razors). Of the 371 fishermen operating within the area, 295 are full-time and 76 are part-time. No data was available on an Angus basis.
- 5.2 The main fishing ports are Eyemouth, Anstruther, and Arbroath/Montrose. The Area covers four local authority boundaries: Scottish Borders; Edinburgh and East Lothian; Fife; and Angus. A Local Co-ordinator and Chairperson were elected in May 2009.

5.3.1 Key local objectives and priorities identified by the South East IFG Executive Committee are:

1. Limitation in fisheries in the South-East Area
2. Limiting vessels fishing creels within the Area
3. Developing Bi-valve fisheries within the Area
4. Profitable and sustainable fisheries
5. Viable fisheries and strong fishing communities
6. Diversification with Fisheries
7. Opening new fisheries and examining ways to fast-track their opening
8. Entrance schemes for new fishermen

5.4 The Executive Committee Chairperson has no fishing connections in the Area and the Local Co-ordinator works full-time for the IFG. This group meets every month or so, to discuss their members' views on opening new fisheries, and more effectively managing existing fisheries. It also looks at the most effective ways of implementing these plans.

5.5 The Inaugural Meeting of South-East IFG Advisory Group was in September 2009. Subjects discussed included: support for the promotion of locally-caught seafood being sold locally; the conflicting use of land for fishing grounds (e.g renewable energy, tidal/offshore wind); the inappropriate statistical basis of relevant information; and funding sources for possible Area projects (e.g. European Fisheries Fund/LEADER). It was thought helpful if the local authorities could explore research funding and that IFGs should support a Government bid for a share in funding.

5.6 There may be a request for Angus Council to support individual associated projects to support this initiative. It is therefore recommended that delegated authority be given to the Head of Economic Development and Environmental and Consumer Protection to award match funding up to £10,000. Each such request will be considered on its own merit.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The posts of Local Co-ordinators have been 100% funded by the Scottish Government. The £10,000 funding to support individual associated projects, for which delegated authority is sought can be contained within the Economic Development Revenue Budget in 2009/10.

7. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no Human Rights implications arising from this report.

8. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The issues dealt with in this report have been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective (as required by legislation). An [equalities impact assessment](#) is not required.

9. SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT (only if required)

9.1 This report contributes to the Single Outcome Agreement for Angus, as follows:

- We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe (sustainable business growth is achieved);

10. CONSULTATION

- 10.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services, Head of Finance and Head of Law and Administration have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

11. CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The South-East Scotland IFG has been established as part of the pilot initiative for IFGs by the Scottish Government. Continued support for this initiative would show the Council's commitment to achieving the goals of promoting sustainable stocks, a healthy marine environment and a profitable fishing sector that supports strong coastal communities in Angus.

**ERIC S LOWSON
DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES**

NOTE: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

ECDEV/DV/PD/FM
22 October 2009