

## Wales Marine Action and Advisory Group 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting, key messages and actions

<b>Title of Meeting</b>	Wales Marine Action & Advisory Group (WMAAG)			<b>Date</b>	26.02.2020
<b>Meeting Number</b>	12	<b>Start Time</b>	10:00	<b>End Time</b>	15:45
<b>Attendance</b>	<p>Peter Davies (Chair) (PD Partnership), Mark Russell (British Marine Aggregates Association), Phil Hollington (Cragen Llyn a Mon), Gill Bell (Marine Conservation Society &amp; Wales Environment Link), Emma McKinley (Cardiff University), Jennifer Grubb (Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water), Andrew Lucas (JNCC), David Jones, Jack Wilkinson &amp; Alec Denny (Pembroke Coastal Forum/Marine Energy Wales), Jonathan Monk (Port of Milford Haven), Nicola Gandy (Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority), Mary Lewis &amp; Kirsty Lindenbaum (Natural Resources Wales), Tabea Wilkes (RSPB), Peter Barham &amp; John Wrottesley (Seabed Users and Developers Group), Katie Harvard-Smith (Severn Estuary Partnership), Jack Middleton (Surfers Against Sewage), David Tudor (The Crown Estate), Jim Evans (Welsh Fishermen's Association), Hannah Osman (Refill Project),</p> <p>Gareth Bevington, Mike Dowell, Elen King, Phil Coates, Tamsin Brown, Mark Bloomfield, Lisa Aspinall, Hilary Evans, Chris Parfitt (Welsh Government)</p>				
<b>Presenters</b>	<p>Gareth Bevington (Welsh Government) Phil Coates (Welsh Government) Adrian Judd (Cefas/Welsh Government) Alec Denny (Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum) Elen King (Welsh Government) Tamsin Brown (Welsh Government) Kirsty Lindenbaum (Natural Resources Wales)</p>				
<b>Apologies</b>	<p>Trevor Jones (Bangor Mussels), Dan Crook (NRW), Jonathan Hughes (National Trust), David McDermott (One Voice Wales), Mike Parry (Pwllheli Partnership), Phil Horton (RYA), Lucy Taylor (Severn Estuary Partnership), Clare Trotman (WEL), John O'Connor (Welsh Federation of Sea Anglers), Nick O'Sullivan (WMFAG Chair), Chris Jenkins &amp; Bekah Cioffi (Welsh Government).</p>				

#	Agenda Item
1.	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies
2.	Marine and Fisheries Division update – Gareth Bevington, Deputy Director, Welsh Government
3.	Welsh National Marine Plan – Phil Coates, Welsh Government
4.	WNMP Strategic Resource Areas – Adrian Judd, Cefas/Welsh Government
5.	Wales Activity Mapping Project – Alec Denny, Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum
6.	Clean Seas Partnership Update – Peter Davies
7.	Future Fisheries Policy & UK Fish Bill – Elen King & Tamsin Brown, Welsh Government
8.	Area Statements – Kirsty Lindenbaum, Natural Resources Wales
9.	Marine Protected Areas, Science & Evidence update – Gareth Bevington

## Introduction

The Wales Marine Action and Advisory group (WMAAG) provides a forum for discussion and debate, and the provision of support and advice to the Welsh Government, on strategic marine and coastal policy. It is the overarching stakeholder group for the work of the Marine and Fisheries Division of the Welsh Government, sitting alongside the Welsh Marine Fisheries Action Group (WMFAG), the lead Welsh Government fisheries industry forum in Wales.

The WMAAG is comprised of 36 stakeholder leads who represent the interests of all sectors with an interest or investment in the Marine in Wales. Details of sectors and lead organisations can be found within the group's [Terms of Reference](#).

## Key Messages and Outputs

### Item 1: Welcome, introductions and apologies

Key messages	Actions
<p>There were a number of apologies, some due to the poor weather conditions or prior commitments.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Gareth Bevington and Mike Dowell to the meeting.</p> <p>Mike Dowell is a newly appointed Deputy Director for Marine and Fisheries Division and will work alongside Gareth Bevington.</p> <p>The Chair explained this meeting would be update focussed given the group had not met for some time. Members were also informed there was no 'stakeholder update' circulated ahead of the meeting as items would be covered during the meeting.</p> <p>Members were to consider the 'stakeholder update' and how useful they found it and provide Elen/Hilary with their feedback.</p>	<p>1.1 Members to provide feedback on the 'Stakeholder Update' as to whether they find it useful.</p>

### Item 2: Marine & Fisheries Division Update

Key messages	Actions
<p>Gareth Bevington, Head of Marine and Fisheries Division provided members with an update.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gareth welcomed Mike Dowell as a second Deputy Director to the Division.</li> <li>• Mike Dowell will have responsibility for International Fisheries, Marine policy and EMFF.</li> </ul>	<p>2.1 Hilary to circulate Division organogram to members.</p> <p>2.2 Gareth to confirm to Jonathan Monk if there is funding for capital for MPA projects as part of the 20/21 budget</p>

- Gareth Bevington will have responsibility for Domestic Fisheries, Control and Enforcement.
- Gareth explained how whilst both Deputy Directors will have their own areas of responsibility the Division remains one Division with two interchangeable Deputy Directors.
- Gareth explained how the Division was restructured in the summer to bring alignment of policy areas and create new teams to ensure Division is more proactive and agile.
  - Control and Enforcement brought into one branch – led by James Watkins.
  - Licensing and Planning brought together – led by John Hamer
  - MSFD and marine biodiversity brought together – led by Chris Jenkins
  - Domestic Fisheries Policy and legislation – led by Julian Bray
  - Fisheries Science and Evidence – led by Bekah Cioffi
  - Marine Science and Evidence – led by Chris Jenkins
  - EMFF Funding Policy – led by Gary Douch
  - Trade – led by Bethan Jones
  - International Fisheries – led by Elin Gwynedd
  - Brexit and Legislation – led by Rob Floyd

Gareth explained there has been significant work involved in ongoing trade agreement negotiations and explained it will continue to take a lot of resource from the Division going forward.

Highlights over the past six months;

- Marine Plan published November 2019. Significant achievement and involved over seven years of work.
- Domestic Fisheries policy working with WMFAG in publishing consultation on flexible management of Whelk fishery in Wales.
- Marine Protected Areas Action Plan delivered end of last year. Marine Resilience have had first meeting and due to next meet 26 March. Division is keen to move onto deliver on commitments.

2.3 Circulate the Permanent Secretary's letter to the scrutiny committee.

**Jonathan Monk** asked if there is funding for capital for projects as part of the budget – Gareth will get back to him on that point.

**David Jones** asked whether the Seas and Coast group were still meeting. Gareth questioned the governance of the group and referred to the Brexit and our Seas (BaOS) and future direction on Future Fisheries Policy (FFP), which may have an external group to cover those areas.

**Gill Bell** asked how conservation will be covered in a new group. Gareth confirmed BaOS and FFP will have an environmental element to it and will maintain an ecosystem approach. He stressed the need to get the governance right and the right people around the table.

**Members** raised concerns about staffing, especially within MSFD and Biodiversity team. The scrutiny from Assembly Committee highlights the importance of marine biodiversity and Gareth confirmed he is looking at filling vacancies across the Division. Gareth agreed to circulate the Permanent Secretary's letter to the scrutiny committee, to members.

**Jonathan Monk** welcomed the Minister's commitment to re-investigate Marine Conservation Zone work.

Gareth welcomed Mike Dowell, newly appointed Deputy Director for the Division. Mike gave a brief synopsis of his background as having a degree in marine biology, his previous role as the Fisheries attaché in Brussels and previous career in Defra. Mike re-iterated that he and Gareth would work together heading up one team. The appointing of two Deputy Directors recognises the volume and breadth of work across the Division.

Peter welcomed Mike to the group.

Item 3: Welsh National Marine Plan (WNMP)

Key Points	Actions
<p>Phil Coates gave an update on the WNMP, re-iterating the plan is not just a document which sits on the shelf but a document to be used.</p> <p><b>Peter Barham</b> congratulated WG on getting the plan published and welcomed how the development heavily involved stakeholders, which is different to England. Peter asked if stakeholders would have opportunity to comment on guidance documents. Phil explained guidance is with policy leads and National policies haven't come to WG yet as still in early stages.</p> <p><b>Peter Davies</b> stated in order to link up better with the sub groups there should be a 'Forward Look' of all sub group meetings including a map of the different stakeholder groups.</p>	<p>3.1 Hilary to Develop a Stakeholder group map and Forward Look for all sub-groups and circulate to members.</p>

Item 4: WNMP Strategic Resource Areas

Key messages	Actions
<p>Adrian Judd from Cefas who works in the Marine Planning and Licensing team gave an overview of Strategic Resource Areas in relation to the Welsh National Marine Plan.</p> <p><b>Adrian</b> confirmed that John Hamer is setting up a meeting with Clare (WEL) to discuss environmental element of next stage.</p> <p><b>David Jones</b> mentioned the Marine Energy Consenting Advisory Group is a strategic group which reports to Lesley Griffiths quarterly. Members discussed planned increases in wind energy and how expert panels are set up and working closely with the SRA Group.</p> <p><b>Adrian and Phil</b> commented how they are working through the SRA and getting evidence base for the sectors.</p>	

Item 5: Wales Activity Mapping

Key messages	Actions
<p><b>David Jones</b>, Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum (PCF), stated this would be his last WMAAG. <b>Peter Davies</b> thanked David for all the great work PCF have done over the last 14 years and wished him well.</p> <p><b>Alec Denny</b>, Sustainable Recreation Coordinator, PCF gave a presentation on the work PCF have been doing on Wales Activity Mapping.</p> <p>Members discussed categorisation of different activities such as Jet Skis, RIBs and motorboats. Members discussed how the data was collected and analysed and whether effectiveness of guidance codes could be evaluated using this data.</p> <p><b>Phil Coates</b> highlighted particular problems with spatial data and stated they should be regarded with health warnings.</p>	

Item 6: Clean Seas Partnership update

Key messages	Actions
<p><b>Peter Davies</b> gave an update on the progress made by the Clean Seas Partnership. Online and published today (26 February)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- marine litter research</li> <li>- marine litter action plan 2020-2023</li> <li>- Newsletter and revised webpages on the Business Wales website.</li> </ul> <p>Members discussed positive impact of 'Blue Planet' and behavioural change. Suggestion to change language from marine litter to plastic pollution. Funding availability was discussed and need to look at what other countries are doing eg Scandinavia, also how to connect into various available resources.</p>	

<p>Peter drew attention to the Fishing Gear sub-group – further details available from <a href="mailto:Mark.Bloomfield@gov.wales">Mark.Bloomfield@gov.wales</a> or <a href="mailto:Lisa.Aspinall@gov.wales">Lisa.Aspinall@gov.wales</a></p> <p>Dates for diaries: <b>Now on hold due to Covid-19 pandemic.</b>          Big Spring Beach Clean – 18-26 April          Circular Economy Consultation to ban wet wipes – deadline 3 April          Global Refill Day – 19 June</p>	
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#### Item 7: Future Fisheries Policy & UK Fish Bill

Key messages	Actions
<p><b>Elen King</b>, Team Leader Stakeholder Engagement and Government Business gave an overview of the outcome of the recent Brexit and Our Seas consultation.</p> <p><b>Jonathan Monk</b> asked about the Assessing Welsh Fisheries project. Gareth confirmed work is ongoing.</p> <p><b>Gill Bell</b> asked about how conservation management was covered in the consultation. Gareth confirmed WG's commitment to the marine ecosystem approach demonstrated through the MPA Action Plan, Marine Plan, Marine Conservation Zones as well as through the Brexit and Our Seas.</p> <p><b>Tamsin Brown</b>, UK Fisheries Bill Manager gave an overview of progress on the Bill and steps towards a Welsh Fisheries Bill to give wider power to manage fisheries for environmental benefit.</p> <p><b>Jim Evans</b> stated financial burden of UK Fish Bill could provide opportunity to make a bid to UK Government for appropriate finance. Gareth recognised the point and agreed to take that point away.</p>	

<p><b>Jonathan Monk</b> asked whether the Bill would get rid of several orders. Tamsin confirmed several orders were not covered by the Bill.</p>	
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### Item 8: Marine Area Statements

Key messages	Actions
<p><b>Kirsty Lindenbaum</b>, Senior Specialist Advisor Marine (Natural Resources Wales) gave a presentation to update members on how the Marine Area Statement has been developed, progress and next steps.</p> <p>To date, our engagement to develop the Marine Area Statement has mainly been with strategic partners. Members discussed how to engage around the marine Area Statement at a local level going forwards.</p> <p><b>Kirsty</b> agreed to send round the NRW Organogram.</p> <p><b>Hilary</b> agreed to send round the high level WG Organogram</p> <p>Key points from discussions were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There's a gap in the coastal community level however, there are lots of Facebook groups which could be used.</li> <li>- potential for using Seacat Project, Pembs Coastal Forum, Cardiff University, Refill Schemes, Sea Trust, Town Council meetings, Cross Border events to communicate messaging.</li> <li>- Be mindful that some engagement will come across single issue groups and ensure answers/lines to take are ready beforehand.</li> <li>- Key action for members to add items to a Forward Look grid and actively promote events within their own stakeholder network.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8.1 Kirsty to send NRW Organogram to Hilary to circulate.</li> <li>8.2 Hilary to circulate WG high level Organogram.</li> <li>8.3 members to add events to the Forward Look and actively promote events across their stakeholder networks.</li> </ul>

Item 9: Marine Protected Areas, Science & Evidence Update

Key messages	Actions
<p><b>Gareth Bevington</b> provided brief update on Marine Protected Areas, Science and Evidence on behalf of Chris Jenkins, who was unable to attend.</p> <p>Marine Evidence Strategy launched in Swansea in November.</p> <p><b>Gill Bell</b> commented the evidence strategy does not investigate how a fully recovered and healthy ecosystem could benefit the economy and that more research was needed in this area. Gareth stated the newly set up Marine Resilience Group is a good vehicle to raise issues/concerns, however, current focus is on delivery rather than re-strategising at this time.</p> <p><b>Jonathan Monk</b> stated Marine Conservation Zone work coming up provides an opportunity to do things better.</p> <p><b>Jonathan Monk</b> explained how the Milford Haven Waterway Scientific working group works together with the Haven and regulating bodies. Action Chris Jenkins and Bekah Cioffi to speak to Jonathan about collective research.</p> <p><b>Mary Lewis</b> commented that the strategy was developed heavily between WG and NRW and the next stages is in making the links between other research projects.</p> <p><b>Jenny Grubb</b>, will check on Dwr Cymru research projects and how they can feed in.</p>	<p>9.1 Chris Jenkins and Bekah Cioffi to speak to Jonathan Monk, regarding the Milford Haven Scientific working group and collective research.</p> <p>9.2 Jenny Grubb to check on research projects and feed back.</p>

Item 10: Sum up and close

Key messages	Actions
<p><b>Peter</b> thanked all members for attending.</p> <p>Next meeting will be <b>7<sup>th</sup> October</b></p> <p>Members urged to consider items for next meeting which we are planning to have a climate change theme and looking at the impacts and role of the marine environment.</p> <p>Peter reminded members of the Marine Planning newsletter, which provides regular updates, not just on marine planning. Link: <a href="https://gov.wales/subscribe-marine-planning-newsletter">https://gov.wales/subscribe-marine-planning-newsletter</a></p>	<p>10.1 Members to put forward suggestions for agenda items to Elen/Hilary or Peter.</p>