

Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority

Ardglass Stakeholders Forum Meeting

held on

Friday, 29 January 2021 at 2.30pm by Zoom

<u>Present:</u>	
Port Users:	Dermot Curran (DC) – Newry, Mourne & Down District Council, Councillor
NIFHA:	Robert McConnell (RMcC) – Chairman of the Board David Hill (DH) – Board Member Kate Burns (KB) – Board Member David Knott (DK) – Board Member Harry Wick (HW) – Board Member Alan McKeown (AMcK) – Board Member Lynn Gilmore (LG) – Board Member Jenny Lau (JennyL) – Environmental Officer Kevin Quigley (KQ) – Chief Executive David Lindsay (DL) – Project Manager James Lenaghan (JL) – Harbour Master Belinda McCaughey (BMcC) – Accounts Administrator
Apologies:	None
	Action
1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS RMcC welcomed all to the meeting and introduced the members of NIFHA Board – 2 existing and 4 new members. Also extended a welcome to JennyL – NIFHA’s new Environmental Officer.	
2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING Minutes of the previous meetings held on 28 June 2019 was accepted.	
3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES Ladder (No 4) – JL advised that an extension to this ladder was requested by the Crab Boats due to distance at low tides. A replacement has been researched but Covid-19 has delayed the replacement process. The entire ladder may need to be replaced and a 2nd ladder required. Hopefully work can commence in the Spring. Marina Space for small vessels - KQ noted that the small vessels do not have enough space within the harbour area. The Marina was approached with a view to allowing these boats a place to berth - no available room at the moment.	

<p>Bait Store Lease – KQ noted we now have 2 Bait store Containers for small vessel usage. JL confirmed plenty of space for the small boats. No issues.</p> <p>New Crane – This will be dealt with under minor works</p>	
<p>4. THANKS</p> <p>KQ thanked all the stakeholders for their contributions during the year.</p>	
<p>5. HEALTH AND SAFETY / PORT MARINE SAFETY</p> <p>KQ noted that use of ladders continues to be a concern. Especially where alcohol and drugs are involved.</p>	
<p>6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS</p> <p>KQ covered the issues. We need to show the fishermen in a more positive light. To this end NIFHA employed an Environmental Officer in December 2020.</p> <p>JennyL introduced herself and confirmed she is looking forward to getting to grips with old issues and emerging issues and looks forward to getting community groups together for the likes of Beach Cleans, etc.</p> <p>It will be an interesting challenge which will hopefully send less to landfill.</p>	
<p>7. OPERATIONAL MATTERS</p> <p>Covid-19 – Still an ongoing problem. We all need to co-operate to get through this pandemic.</p> <p>Out of Hours Service – NIFHA provide this service to look after our customers but we also need to look after our staff. We do not operate a 24/7 service.</p> <p>Berthing – There is no simple solution to berthing in the Harbour. There are too many vessels wanting to use the same space. Most of the time the Boats regulate themselves.</p> <p>Pelagic Vessel Landings – JL noted that he is in close communication with the Pelagic Vessels to enable space for them to berth. A text message is sent to our vessels the evening before arrival and our vessels move to facilitate them. These pelagic vessels are important both to local industries and to NIFHA.</p>	
<p>8. CAPITAL & MINOR WORKS</p> <p>DL gave an update on the current Capital Works. In particular:</p> <p>Harbour Masters Offices – Kilkeel refurbishment has commenced and it is hoped that Ardglass will start after Easter.</p> <p>Parkgate Site in Portavogie – Project going out to tender shortly.</p> <p>Traffic Management – The aim of this is to ensure good operation around the harbours – very difficult due to public</p> <p>Gear Stores – Containers are to be provided to store goods from Vessels</p>	

Ardglass Ultrasonic Survey – Funding has been approved to proceed with this.

Future Capital Works

DL talked on this and the uncertainty over future funding. Around £1.5M is required just to keep the harbours at status quo.

Possibilities for future Ardglass Projects include

- Larger Crane required
- Davit – needs to be replaced.
- Small Vessel Pontoons – an area needs to be identified.
- Rock Armour Replenishment

Minor Works

These are the projects below the threshold for funding. DL discussed in particular:

- Ardglass Lighthouse painting
- Dredging – completed
- Kilkeel Marker Pile – replaced
- Kilkeel Fishmarket – Rolling minor works programme to keep up to date with standards
- Kilkeel and Portavogie Slipway Repairs – ongoing
- Bait Stores – NIFHA contributed 20% of the cost of the 2 new bait stores.

KQ noted there was a substantial workload in Projects and commended DL on all his efforts.

DC offered his help within the Council which KQ appreciated.

DC asked for clarity on 2 buildings within Ardglass Harbour.

Empty Factory in front of HM Offices (formally Cochranes Factory) – JL confirmed work is taking place there at the moment. Plans are in place to open and use again from next year. Just today signs were places above the doors.

North Dock (beside Milligan Oil) – KQ confirmed there were plans to build apartments here a number of years ago but there has been no recent activity.

9. **LEAVING THE EU**

KQ updated the stakeholders on issues regarding the labelling of fish boxes. All fish boxes for export must be labelled with details of vessel, catch, area caught, and where landed.

<p>Discussions with DAERA and Local Councils took place in November and December 2020 and agreement was reached that one label would suffice with all the required information on it.</p> <p>Since then there has been no communication and KQ has requested an update from both bodies.</p> <p>KQ noted that this will be the responsibility of the fishermen in the future.</p>	KQ
<p>10. HARBOUR INVESTMENT REVIEW</p> <p>Some time ago a review of the needs of the fishing industry was commissioned. It has 2 parts. The first part – looking at investment requirements has been published – leaning towards investment in Kilkeel. But the Ardglass side is still under review. The Sonic Survey planned will give some more information on Ardglass for this review and there is still more work to be done on the Kilkeel Plan.</p> <p>The industry needs substantial investment. DH confirmed NIFHA’s support for all three harbours and the need to future proof the industry.</p>	
<p>11. EQUALITY</p> <p>KQ confirmed NIFHA’s entrenched adherence to Equality for all. It is the Authority’s view that all people should be treated fairly. No bullying or harassment should be taking place. We aspire to improve and have a responsibility to the disabled in our Community.</p>	
<p>12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>KQ noted that NIFHA will look at different ways that we could reach out to our Stakeholders. Face to Face meetings, during this pandemic are impossible.</p> <p>Main sources of feedback are through the Harbour Masters and our staff.</p> <p>DK commended KQ on the meeting content and noted it gave a good overview of the Ardglass setup.</p> <p>KQ will liaise with the Harbour Master to see if there are any other ways to reach out to the fishermen.</p> <p>LG – Reported on the Home & Dry Campaign that was run by Seafish in 2020. The 2nd phase of this is due to commence in March. Thanks to NIFHA for their support in the 1st phase and the buy in from local fishermen.</p> <p>DC thanked KQ for all of today’s information and again offered his help if required in the future.</p> <p>DH confirmed many fishermen are now seeing the Environmental issues and see that it is now a shared environment.</p>	KQ/JL

Fishing for Litter was good in all three harbours. – JennyL confirmed it would be relaunched in the summer.

The meeting expressed their concerns over the missing fishermen from Conway in Wales

KQ thanked all for attending the meeting. This being all the business the meeting closed at 3.36pm