

# Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority

Ardglass Stakeholders Forum Meeting

held on

*Friday, 19 November 2021 at 2.30pm by Zoom*

<b><u>Present:</u></b>	
<b>Port Users:</b>	Dermot Curran (DC) – Newry, Mourne & Down District Council, Councillor
<b>NIFHA:</b>	Alan McKeown (AMcK) – Board Member & Chair of Meeting Robert McConnell (RMcC) – Chairman of the Board David Knott (DK) – Board Member Harry Wick (HW) – 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
<b>Apologies:</b>	Kate Burns (KB) – Board Member Lynn Gilmore (LG) – Board Member Dick James (DJ)
	<b>Action</b>
1. <b>WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS</b> AMcK welcomed all to the meeting.	
2. <b>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</b> Minutes of the previous meetings held on 29 January 2021 was accepted.	
3. <b>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES</b> <b>Fish Box Labelling</b> – There has been no further communication received on this issue from either of the councils or DAERA.	
4. <b>THANKS</b> KQ thanked all the stakeholders for their co-operation during these difficult times.	
5. <b>HEALTH AND SAFETY / PORT MARINE SAFETY</b> KQ emphasized the proper use of ladders around the harbour. Advised all to be aware of trip hazards around the harbour.  Alcohol remains an issue with fishermen accessing vessels whilst drunk.	

<p><b>6. THE ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>JennyL spoke to issues around the harbour. She praised the fishermen for bin use.</p> <p>Oil Drums are being brought up in fishing nets. If any are sighted they need to be reported to Belfast Coastguard. If any photos are available they would be useful as a means of identification.</p> <p>Beach Cleans – so far this year there has been 960Kg of waste taken from Ardglass beaches – great participation from the Community and local children.</p> <p>Net Cuttings are becoming more of an issue – net menders need to clean up after themselves.</p> <p>Recent grant funding was received to purchase a Sweeper / Hoover machine for Ardglass.</p> <p>Fishing for Litter – Across all three harbours there has been a total of 5T of waste removed from the Sea – 3T of this was from Ardglass. JennyL noted that Fishing for Litter Bags are for waste from the sea only – should not contain galley waste.</p> <p>JL noted there was much fewer blue gloves found on the beaches now – fishermen have begun to dispose of these properly.</p> <p>AMcK praised Ardglass for leading the fishing for litter tonnage tables. Good for Ardglass to lead the way – possible friendly competition with the other harbours.</p> <p>In response to a question from DC JennyL noted that most common types of litter picked up are plastic bottles, net cuttings, rags, etc. She also noted that hard plastic can be recycled.</p>	
<p><b>7. OPERATIONAL MATTERS</b></p> <p>KQ praised the 3 dedicated staff members in Ardglass.</p> <p><b>Covid-19</b> – Rules are still in place to cope with this pandemic. We all need to co-operate to get through this pandemic.</p> <p><b>Ice Plant</b> – Still significant issues around the Ice Plant which are not fully resolved. But we are working on a plan to sort this out.</p> <p><b>Pelagic Vessel Landings</b> – These landings are very important to both NIFHA and the local community. JL thanked the fishermen for their cooperation in moving boats at short notice when a pelagic vessel is coming in to land.</p>	
<p><b>8. CAPITAL &amp; MINOR WORKS</b></p> <p>DL gave an update on the grant funding arrangements. EMFF is due to end and will be replaced by MFF (UK equivalent). DL also detailed current Capital Works. In particular:</p> <p><b>Harbour Masters Offices</b> – Refurbishment is now complete.</p>	

<p><b>Gear Stores</b> – Cost of Containers has doubled since initial costings. KQ has formally signed off the extension to the grant.</p> <p><b>Ardglass SBP Survey</b> – Completed.</p> <p><b>Costing Ardglass Improvement</b> – With survey complete we are now moving to the costing of the Deepening project. If this is suitable to government we can move to the next stage.</p> <p><b>Two Davits</b> – An order has been placed to replace the 2 davits at the fishmarket. This should take place before Easter of 2022.</p> <p>JL will meet with the Crab fishermen to determine their placements.</p> <p><b>Future Capital Works</b></p> <p>DL advised there was still no clarity on the new funding system.</p> <p>Possibilities for future Ardglass Projects include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knuckle Boom Crane for loading gear.</li> <li>• Small Vessel pontoons – will depend on the deepening project.</li> <li>• Rock Armour Replenishment – inspected periodically and the last survey and inspection has highlighted repairs needed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Wider Issues</b></p> <p>There is a wider issue around how we use resources and energy in the future.</p> <p><b>Minor Works</b></p> <p>DL discussed in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ardglass Lighthouse has been repaired and painted.</li> <li>• Ice Plant – monies being spent on repair are ongoing.</li> <li>• Saw Pit Ladder – this has been extended.</li> </ul> <p>Monies are not easily found for these minor works projects.</p>	<p>JL</p>
<p>9. <b>HARBOURS DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <p>Overall NIFHA and the Board are committed to ensuring the harbours are fit for purpose. This will entail development across all the harbours. NIFHA have a role to play in this.</p> <p>The FSDP details c.£20m for deepening Ardglass Harbour. Kilkeel is at the next step – the Environmental and Engineering Studies have been approved to go forward to CPD for tender.</p>	

<p>KQ noted the next step in the engineering studies is to determine costs. Info from the bottom survey should allow for an affordable development plant with Ardglass Development Association and DAERA.</p>	
<p><b>10. EQUALITY</b></p> <p>KQ noted this is what makes NIFHA work well - good relations combined with a disability plan. It is our aim to make our world a better place for our fishermen.</p> <p>Mental Health issues are important for both staff and customers.</p>	
<p><b>11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>A recently held Corporate Planning meeting with NIFHA Board viewed future with optimism. AMcK noted that the authority are ambitious in what we want to see and confirmed that there will be no delay from NIFHA in driving the FSDP forward.</p> <p>HW brought forward a question he had been asked by Dick James – namely could the Crab vessels use the berths in the marina in stormy weather? KQ advised that NIFHA have no power to tell the Marina what they can or cannot do.</p> <p>DC, KQ and JL met with the Marina and were told that berthing could not take place due to possible damage to the pontoons.</p> <p>Dick James would also like to be included in discussions over the placement of the pontoons. Conversations have not started regarding the pontoons but when this commences both fishermen and the harbour development group will be consulted.</p> <p>JennyL confirmed that equality training took place recently which was good to see.</p> <p>A question was asked over the water quality in the harbour and whether products should be washed in it. KQ confirmed vessels were not allowed to use harbour water to wash their product. DL confirmed the EHO can seize and destroy catch that has been washed this way.</p> <p>JennyL will investigate the water quality in the harbour.</p> <p>Solar panels on the roof at the fishmarket – would this reduce carbon targets. JL confirmed this has been investigated and JennyL is looking at funding availability. DL confirmed funding had been turned down when the fishmarket was refurbished.</p> <p>JL noted that a complaint had been raised by a fisherman having to move his vessel to allow a pelagic vessel to land at short notice. JL confirmed information was relayed to the vessel as soon as he was aware of it.</p>	<p>KQ</p> <p>JennyL</p> <p>JennyL</p>

JL confirmed that the damage on the Strangford Road wall will be repaired within a few weeks.

DC gave his appreciation for all the work being done and offered his help if required in the future.

AMcK noted the value of this meeting is good but there is a need to encourage more to attend.

AMcK thanked everyone for their attendance. This being all the business the meeting closed at 3.30pm