

Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority

Ardglass Stakeholders Forum Meeting

held on

Friday, 04 November 2022 at 2.30pm

Harbour Masters Office, Ardglass

Present:	
Port Users:	<p>Jim Masson (JM) – Ardglass Harbour Development Dick James (DJ) – Vessel Owner Jakara Simon Wills (SW) – Vessel Owner Oceanus Stephen McComiskey (SMcC) – DAERA Andrew Campbell (AC) – DAERA Harry Wick (HW) – NIFPO CEO & NIFHA Board Member</p>
NIFHA:	<p>Lynn Gilmore (LG) – Board Member & Chair of Meeting Alan McKeown (AMcK) – Interim Chair of the Board David Knott (DK) – Board Member Jenny Lau (JennyL) – Environmental Officer Kevin Quigley (KQ) – Chief Executive James Lenaghan (JL) – Harbour Master Belinda McCaughey (BMcC) – Accounts Administrator</p>
Apologies:	<p>Comgall Milligan Dermot Curran</p>
	Action
1.	<p>WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS LG welcomed all to the meeting and introductions were made by all.</p>
2.	<p>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING Minutes of the previous meetings held on 19 November 2021 were accepted.</p>
3.	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES</p> <p>Water Quality in Harbour – Sampling has not yet commenced.</p> <p>Solar Panels on Fishmarket Roof – This project has not yet commenced as funding is not available. The new NIFHA Corporate Plan will address renewable energy projects and it is possible that this could be included in the new Harbour Project.</p> <p>Davit Placement – it was agreed to position the new davits in the same location as the old ones..</p> <p>Sawpit Ladder – this was extended.</p>

<p>4. HEALTH AND SAFETY / PORT MARINE SAFETY</p> <p>KQ confirmed this was a priority and reminded all to stay focused on three things – safe use of ladders, preventing trip hazards and to be aware of alcohol and substance abuse.</p> <p>SW raised a point about staff pay and retention. KQ confirmed the pay issues are being addressed through a pay review process, but NIFHA are bound by the Department of Finance in setting pay .</p> <p>LG thanked SW on behalf of the Authority for raising the point about staff remuneration and HW confirmed NIFHA, and the Board are trying to do all that they can. KQ noted that Ardglass is run by an exceptional and well-motivated team.</p> <p>DJ informed those present that a member of the public had been blown over in the strong wind while walking alone at the harbour and required hospital treatment. JL confirmed that the gates to the harbour had been closed at the time and said that he will ensure accident details are recorded.</p> <p>LG asked DJ to pass on best wishes for a speedy recovery from the Board to the individual involved.</p>	<p>JL</p>
<p>6. CAPITAL WORKS</p> <p>KQ updated on projects which had progressed since the last meeting. In particular the new fishmarket davits, the User Interface to update the process for Ice deliveries, Saw Pit ladder extension and the new storage containers. He also confirmed that a new Condenser is on order for the Ice Plant.</p> <p>KQ also discussed future Capital works. MFF will be the main source of funding for harbour projects with a total budget of between £300k to £500k expected. All harbours are competing for this small pot.</p> <p>KQ said that fishmarket showers will need to be improved to provide better facilities for crews. There is potential to rearrange the existing internal space in the fishmarket to accommodate this.</p> <p>SW asked about the potential to provide a washing machine noting that the machines installed at Fishermen’s Mission are too expensive - £22 for one load. KQ confirmed NIFHA would be open to private funding to accommodate this request. DJ noted that Ardglass Harbour Development could potentially help with this if the Harbour Authority were able to provide a suitable location for the machines.</p> <p>Solar Panels for the fishmarket roof are also being investigated.</p> <p>Pontoons for small vessels – A proposed drawing was shown and KQ confirmed that the funding scheme was not yet open. Once scheme opens there will be a 12 week window to submit a grant application.</p> <p>There may be an issue around the dumping of the hardcore at sea from dredging operations if the pontoon project goes ahead. This presents its own challenge within the Business Plan.</p>	

<p>KQ noted that a sample letter of support from the fishermen was available after the meeting and stated that he would welcome industry support for the pontoon project which would strengthen the business case for funding.</p>	
<p>6. HARBOUR INVESTMENT REVIEW</p> <p>NIFHA have been working with DAERA and CPD to get Integrated Consultant Teams (ICTs) in place. This will be for both the Ardglass and Kilkeel projects.</p> <p>NIFHA Board are very keen to progress these two new projects together with the new Slipway Cradle in Portavogie.</p> <p>DJ queried the use of the small slip in Portavogie and KQ confirmed that it would be used for decommissioning for a few years.</p> <p>KQ discussed the Ardglass Harbour deepening project – he said that a clear understanding of the seabed was required before dredging could commence.</p> <p>JM tabled another Capital Project for which funding may be available. The proposal involves erecting a building for net repairs and possibly a community classroom in the current Net Racking Area. There is a maximum fund of £100k which would require matched funding.</p> <p>DJ or JM will put this proposal in writing and KQ will take to next NIFHA Board Meeting.</p>	JM / DJ
<p>7. THE ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>JennyL advised the meeting that some funding is available to pay fishermen to disassemble nets for a gear recycling project, with funding available until the end of March 2023. It is a small amount but those present indicated it is welcome in the current and difficult financial environment.</p> <p>JennyL went on to say that 8 beach cleans have taken place so far in Ardglass with 1.8T of rubbish removed. The most common fishing-related rubbish found are small offcuts of net and string- SW noted that he is now cleaning these up from the deck of his boat to stop them entering the harbour.</p> <p>JennyL also reported that Keep NI Beautiful survey the harbour 4 times per year and noted that huge efforts industry are making which they need to keep up so we can continue to celebrate that good work.</p> <p>HW confirmed the importance of recognising the good works carried out by the fishermen. The inclusion of blue gloves in the rubbish is decreasing – only accounts for about 3% of the waste now.</p> <p>NIFPO sponsor beach cleans in Kilkeel and Portavogie – HW offered support for the Ardglass programme by way of food or a donation to the local school or sports team who are engaged in the beach cleans. JennyL will liaise with HW on this.</p> <p>A discussion took place on the feasibility of a Seabin in the area where litter gathers in Ardglass Harbour. JennyL will investigate the feasibility of and potential funding for a Seabin in this area.</p>	<p>JennyL</p> <p>JennyL</p>

<p>JennyL updated the group on the Fishing for Litter (FFL) initiative. She said that approximately 3T of litter had been recovered at sea by fishing vessels, brought ashore and disposed of. The initiative was covered on BBC news and the recording has been viewed thousands of times. JennyL stated that FFL is the most cost-effective way of removing litter from the sea. SW confirmed his crews are no longer throwing litter overboard, but are bringing it to shore for disposal.</p> <p>JennyL stated that an Oil Skimmer is now in place in Ardglass Harbour and that a drinking water fountain is being installed by the local council.</p> <p>LG thanked SW for his endeavours and those of his fellow fishermen in the clearing up of litter in and around the harbour.</p> <p>JennyL also advised the meeting of the improvements to Waste Collection taking place in Kilkeel and noted these may be rolled out to Ardglass and Portavogie.</p>	
<p>8. OPERATIONAL MATTERS</p> <p>Crewing – changes to immigration regulations are a major concern for industry. Fishermen are keen that the NIFHA show support on these issues which could have a huge and detrimental effect on the ability of fishing vessel owners to find the crew required to go to sea.</p> <p>LG noted that anything that NIFHA or the Board can do to help will be done.</p> <p>Dredging – KQ noted that harbour dredging is ongoing but that the vessel would be finishing shortly and returning to Kilkeel.</p> <p>Pelagic Vessel Landings – SW noted that when he has to move his vessel to facilitate landings by pelagic vessels he has to pay his crew. KQ noted he will look at whether it might be possible to seek some reimbursement. JL said that fishermen had been very helpful and supportive in moving their vessels when required. a</p> <p>LG reiterated what JL said in praise of the fishermen moving vessels when required.</p> <p>DJ noted that the purpose of the new harbour project was to create greater depth in the harbour which would reduce the need to move vessels so often.</p>	KQ
<p>9. EQUALITY</p> <p>KQ again stressed the Authority’s commitment to equality and noted his appreciation of the support of the fishermen in this.</p> <p>He stated it is the duty of the Authority to promote good relations.</p>	
<p>10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>KQ thanked all for their support during the last year and said the co-operation of the industry in Ardglass is really appreciated.</p>	

AMcK thanked the participants of this meeting for their input.

JM noted the teamwork within the harbour and expressed his appreciation of this.

DJ commented that it is important to have a steering committee in place for the Pontoon project going forward.

SW asked about the charges made to non authority vessels for slipping and waste, etc. KQ confirmed they pay an additional percentage over what Authority vessels do.

SMcC thanked NIFHA for their invite to this meeting .

LG concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for attending. She also confirmed the Board's commitment to the development of the harbour.

This being all the business the meeting closed at 4pm