Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority

Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting In Head Office, Downpatrick *Tuesday 12th September 2023 at 10.30am*

Present:	David Knott – Interim Chair Kevin Quigley – Chief Executive Alan McKeown – Board Member Davey Hill – Board Member (Teams) Lynn Gilmore – Board Member
In attendance	Belinda McCaughey – Accounts Administrator David Lindsay (David L) – Project Manager – For item 9 only

		Action
1.	Welcome & Apologies	
	David welcomed all to the meeting. No apologies	
2.	Declaration of Interests	
	Davey confirmed nothing new – just usual as owner of 4 vessels.	
3.	Minutes of Meeting held on 28 February 2023	
	Minutes were agreed.	
4.	Matters Arising	
	Kevin confirmed that most of the matters arising were taken to the June Board Meeting. Exceptions being:	
	Ice Plant Costing will be brought to the November meeting.	Belinda
	Slide was added to the Kilkeel stakeholders meeting presentation on 1 September - although attendance was low the meeting was very constructive with a high level of engagement.	
	Kevin confirmed himself and 2 Harbour Masters would be attending the British Ports October Meeting in Peterhead. A visit to surrounding harbours will also take place.	
	Dredger licence for Kilkeel inner basin has been received and work has commenced on clearing the buildup. Both Ardglass and Portavogie benefited from some dredging work whilst the licence was being sought.	
	Kevin confirmed there will be a need to contact Marine Licensing towards the end of 2023 to determine the way forward.	Kevin

	Action
DAERA are about to go to consultation on their Carbon action plans under the new Climate Change Regulations – David requested we attend the consultation meetings.	Kevin
David also noted that the Department for Communities has a Carbon Action Plan which has now been published: <u>https://www.communities-</u> ni.gov.uk/publications/dfc-climate-change-action-plan-2022-23	
Kevin noted that NIFHA attends Vessels of the Future Forum Meetings and Lynn advised that the Sea Fish Forum covers the whole of the UK.	
FSDP – Currently no progress on this.	
Interviews for vacant Admin Post will take place next week, a successful recruitment should ease some of the current administration pressure.	
5. 2023/24 Management Accounts and Cash Position – quarter ended 30 June 2023	
Excellent first quarter – with forecast for next quarter also looking good. Kevin discussed details of Income and Expenditure. In particular he noted the good performance on landing and buyers dues. Ice Sales are lower than last year. Whilst expenditure is currently down, further costs will be incurred as the year progresses.	
Belinda updated the committee on the current electricity costings and the ongoing analysis of usage against revised prices per unit.	
Pay Remit for 2022/23 has been submitted and is currently with the Permanent Secretary for approval before forwarding to DoF.	
Kevin took questions on the papers supplied. In particular:	
Repairs – in the past some small projects have been Grant funded.	
Dredging Costs – playing catch up. Should be on par with budget by year end.	
Decommissioning – Anchor has been tested. Concrete is due to be poured shortly with a subsequent test scheduled. Actual decommissioning of two vessels should take place before end of year.	
Belinda updated the committee on the breakdown of Sundries and Professional Services. Summary Sheets will be provided with packs going forward.	
Port Waste Management – Increase is mainly in Kilkeel and is due to the change in how we deal with waste. Staff time has been released due to the installation of 2 secure cages but more waste than anticipated has been received. These secure cages are for genuine fishing related waste and Breach of Bye Laws notices will be issued for non compliance.	
Balance Sheet shows positive Cash Balance of £622.6k.	

		Action
	Aged Debtors – The committee discussed the figures and asked for a summary to be included with comments on make up of older debt.	Belinda
6.	Business Plan 2023/24 – Memo from David Simpson	
	The committee discussed the memo received from David Simpson, Director of Corporate Services within DAERA regarding the submitted Business Plan.	
	Kevin noted that when the original Business Plan was submitted we had initial queries but subsequently nothing. It did not seem to go through the normal vetting process.	
	The memo refers to scheduling a meeting with Kevin; David confirmed that a meeting with the Board is also important.	
	Issues raised included the raising of Levies which historically was not appealing to DAERA. This would have to be included in the Corporate Plan and would be subject to consultation with the Industry.	
	A major point to note is that NIFHA do not suffer trading losses – we are providing a statutory service and are not a trading organisation.	
	Kevin to draft a response to David Simpson and circulate to the Board for comment before submission.	Kevin/ Board
	There were concerns around the date a new Chair would be appointed. Should revision of the Corporate Plan be delayed until a new Chair is in place. Kevin will speak to DAERA regarding the appointment. (Note: confirmation subsequently received from DAERA that the appointment process is progressing to plan).	Kevin
	The committee agreed provisionally that a session on the Corporate Plan should be organised for October.	David/ Kevin
7.	Revised Budget – 2023/24	
	Kevin noted that as we are now in September there should only be a small deficit which we can fund from reserves.	
	Issues in Business Plan include us providing a decommissioning service which is really the responsibility of DAERA. Kevin noted this cost could be removed but there is a real risk of the abandoned vessels sinking and causing other problems. DAERA are not aware of the full cost of decommissioning.	
	Alan asked if the proposed budget deficit of £276k could be further reduced.	
	The Committee fully discussed the contents of the budget and a decision was taken to show net of vessel dismantling was taken.	
	Kevin to bring revised Business Plan to the September Board meeting for approval.	Kevin/ Board
	Davey noted that an increase in fisheries officers in the South of Ireland may, in a roundabout way, aid the pelagic landings in Ardglass.	

		Action
	Current DAERA approved budget for Grant in Aid is £100k.	
8.	Current Forecast – 2023/24	
	Forecast will be set using the revised budget as the target.	Kevin
9.	Capital Works Update	
	David L. joined the meeting for this Item and updated the committee on the 4 ongoing Capital Works Projects.	
	 Namely: Ardglass Solar Panels Ardglass Fish market Welfare Refurbishment Portavogie Pier Tip Repairs Ardglass and Kilkeel Quay Edge Fendering 	
	Grant funding for a workboat in Kilkeel had previously been denied but this has now changed and funding is available. Procurement has started for an open dory type boat which will be Cat 6 compliant.	
	The planned Waste Management Project for Ardglass and Portavogie has been turned down for funding – too small.	
	UKSFF - Portavogie Slipway Enhancement. Costs have come in over budget and there is a need to revert back to DEFRA. Worse case scenario we will have to pull out of the project.	
	The committee discussed each of the projects in detail.	
	Interviews took place for a temporary Assistant Project Manager (funding made available by DAERA) but were unsuccessful. It is likely that the decision will be taken to abandon this appointment and forfeit the grant.	
10.	Estate Management and Development	
	Kevin discussed current estate issues across all three harbours.	
	Surrender of lease requests have reverted back to each of the current leaseholders. We will await their decision on the proposals made.	
	Costs re the Wayleave for pipe works on Rooney Road have been passed back to the owner We await detailed designs before we can proceed with drawing up the wayleave.	
	Mapping is required for progression of some of the leases. Kevin will action.	Kevin
11.	Any Other Business	
	None	
12.	Date of Next Meeting	
	Thursday 23 November 2023 and will be in Kilkeel.	