

Cross-Party Group on Fisheries and Coastal Communities

Wednesday 5th June 2024, 18:30

Minute of the Annual General Meeting

Present

MSPs

Karen Adam MSP
Beatrice Wishart MSP
Jamie Greene MSP

Invited guests

Dr Mitchell Lennan

Non-MSP Group Members

Archippus Sturrock - Office of Karen Adam MSP
Eleanor Adamson - Fishermongers' Company
Cameron Moffat - Salamander Floating Offshore Wind Farm
Caitlin Turner - Young Sea Changes Scotland
James Mackenzie - SIFT
Elspeth Macdonald - Scottish Fishermen's Federation
Tyra Dempster - MSc Food Policy student at City, University of London
Ailsa Nicol - Orsted
Jessica Jones - Scottish Wildlife Trust
Peter Duncan - Peterhead Port Authority
Bally Philip - Scottish Creel Fishermen's Federation
Iona Yule - Invicta Public Affairs

Apologies

Dr Alasdair Allan MSP
Ariane Burgess MSP
Phil Taylor, Open Seas

Approval of minute of meeting held on 20 February 2024

Members of the Cross-Party Group were happy to approve the minutes of the last meeting, but the misspelling of James Mackenzie's name in the previous minutes was noted.

Approval of non-MSP members

North East Scotland Fisheries Development Partnership (NESFDP) - Approved
Dr Mitchell Lennan - Approved

Statement from former secretariat

Karen Adam MSP informed the Cross-Party Group that the current secretariat was no longer able to support the CPG due to the closing of their public affairs division.

She read a statement from Angela Casey, Managing Director of Pagoda PR who have been providing our secretariat:

"Due to a refocus of its business, Pagoda PR has closed its public affairs division and is no longer offering suitable services that could support the CPG in its work. The team apologises for inconvenience caused and wishes the CPG and its members the very best for the future."

Appointment of new secretariat

Karen Adam MSP informed the Cross-Party Group that she has engaged with a number of agencies who may be able to offer their services to support the CPG with secretarial support in light of Pagoda PR no longer being able to do so.

She asked if the Cross-Party Group was happy for her to make a decision in this regard. No objections were raised.

Re-election of Office Bearers

Convener: Karen Adam MSP

Proposed by Beatrice Wishart MSP. Seconded by Jamie Greene MSP.

Karen Adam MSP re-elected as Convener.

Deputy Convener: Beatrice Wishart MSP

Proposed by Karen Adam MSP. Seconded by Jamie Greene MSP.

Beatrice Wishart MSP re-elected as Deputy Convener.

Inquiry into Marine Spatial Planning

Karen Adam MSP reminded the Cross-Party Group that, at the last meeting, Dr Mitchell Lennan from the University of Aberdeen discussed the regulatory context around marine spatial planning. She added that there was support at the last meeting for further work on understanding and improving co-existence between different stakeholders, as far as marine spatial planning is concerned.

Karen Adam MSP informed the Cross-Party Group that her office has engaged further with Dr Mitchell Lennan and the Fishmongers' Company and that the latter is able to provide a grant for an independent report guided by input of MSP members of the Cross-Party Group.

Karen Adam MSP asked the Cross-Party Group if it was content to explore this further. MSPs agreed.

Any other business

Karen Adam MSP invited members to discuss any other business.

Bally Philip from SCFF wishes to make sure that fisheries management is included in work on marine spatial planning and wants the opportunity to provide feedback in advance of the decision to pursue a piece of work on marine spatial planning.

Elsbeth Macdonald from SFF raised concerns and wishes to understand scope and remit and discuss further with Dr Lennan before agreeing.

Jamie Greene MSP offered advice on process for commissioning a piece of research and funding, for example the Fishmonger's Company could directly commission an academic to do the research and the Cross-Party Group could receive the work and consider it.

James Mackenzie from SIFT wishes to understand how the inquiry might best be delivered. He thinks that it is key for economic and environmental objectives not to be set against each other and while welcomes engagement, believes that Dr Lennan should be able to carry out his work independently.

Ailsa Nicol from Orsted wishes to see an outline of the inquiry, including methodology, circulated to the members of the CPG and to have the opportunity to reflect on that.

Karen Adam MSP took on board the points made and asked if the Cross-Party Group if it was content to discuss this further and to invite Dr Lennan to provide a scoping document. Jamie Greene MSP agreed.

Jamie Greene MSP raised a question on cross-over with aquaculture in the inquiry on marine spatial planning.

Karen Adam MSP stated that she thought it was a good point and that this is exactly the space and the initiative to explore that further.

Bally Philip from SCFF agreed that the work on marine spatial planning should include aquaculture.

Beatrice Wishart MSP stated that it seems to her that it is always fisheries that seems to have to give up space as far as marine spatial planning is concerned and agreed that marine spatial planning and the 'spatial squeeze' were topics of interest to explore.

Elsbeth Macdonald from SFF urged for the Cross-Party Group to be realistic about what it could achieve with this work on marine spatial planning.

Cameron Moffat from Orsted raised concern at how wide the scope of the work could be and raised the Celtic Sea as an example to look at as far as best practice is concerned.

Bally Philip from SCFF agreed with Cameron Moffat from Orsted that we should not duplicate work but stated that an understanding of best practices in Scotland would be useful. He also said that while there are wide-ranging interests in this area, the relationship between fisheries and renewables was a significant one to understand further.

Elsbeth Macdonald from SFF disagreed.

Karen Adam MSP invited members to make suggestions for work for the Cross-Party Group.

Bally Philip from SCFF raised the idea of the 'Just Transition' as a topic of interest for the Cross-Party Group.

Jessica Jones from Scottish Wildlife Trust asked for further consideration of how the work of the Cross-Party Group could reach and be better explained to the coastal communities.

Karen Adam MSP thanked attendees for taking the time to join the AGM online and said the next meeting of the Cross-Party Group should take place in September 2024 by which point a new secretariat would be in place.