**North Thames Fisheries Local Action Group (NTFLAG) Board Meeting**

10th April 2017 2:00 PM | Meeting location Leigh Community Centre

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| Type of meeting | Board Meeting |
| Facilitator | Amy Pryor |
| Note taker | Kesella Scott-Somme |

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| **Attendees****Voting:** Richard Eves, Paul Gilson, Andy Mazirel, Peter Wexham, Carole Mulroney, Tanya Ferry, Alison Semmence, Claire Dumontier-Marriage, Andrew Rattley, Cllr Bernard Arscott, Pat Fitzsimons.  **Non-voting:** Amy Pryor, Giles Tofield, Anna Patel, Kesella Scott-Somme, and Nicola Mason. |

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# Agenda topics

Agenda topic Chair Elections

***Summary***

The Process of Chair election was explained. The criteria document detailing the election process of the Chair and vice Chair was distributed via email and copies are available here. The elected Chair will go through formal training with the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) (the key partner and accountable body, working in partnership with TEP and the NTFLAG). The Chair position will be elected every 12 months, Chair will not have a vote except in the case where a casting vote is needed. Four potential Chairs put their names forward for the position (Peter Wexham, Carole Mulroney, Pat Fitzsimons, and Andrew Rattley). Whoever receives the most votes will be Chair and the second most will be Vice Chair. An application form for new Board members was discussed and a scoring mechanism should be used, similar to that of other FLAGs.

**General Discussion**

***Questions, answers and statements***

**Q**: What if someone just turns up and wants to vote?

**A:** FLAG Board has to be open to anyone interested and remain fluid and flexible, however, prospective Board members must meet criteria we agree upon, bring expertise and sector representation. There is a limit of 30 places on the Board to keep the size and decision making manageable. Members need to be representative of the area and we need 10-49% active fishermen. Currently there isn't an issue with Board representation, there is an even spread across sectors with adequate fisheries representation, Council members are representing different areas and some members are non-voting.

 Elected Chair: Andrew Rattley and Vice Chair: Pat Fitzsimons

| Action items | Person responsible | Deadline |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Review information on Board representation  | All Board Members | Before next meeting |

Agenda topic Draft Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct

***Summary***

As FLAG Board members you will be expected to abide by and sign the Terms of Reference (ToR) and Code of Conduct. If any other FLAG member feels you are not abiding by any point they can bring this to a meeting and if this is agreed by other FLAG members you may be asked to leave the Board. To be clear; this is not about personal likes and dislikes, if a Board member meets the Board membership criteria, and are a necessary representative, they will be kept on. You are a representative of FLAG and must maintain impartiality, conduct yourself with common courtesy, stick with project messages and clear any major movements (such as an article in Fishing News) with the Board.

**General Discussion**

***Questions, answers and statements***

**Q:**Concerned about conflicts of interest, particularly from Chairs as they won't be able to represent their own interests and are very involved in the area.

**A:** If you’re on the Board you should be representing the Board first and foremost, Chair needs to declare conflict of interest at the start and then can speak about their own case. If Chair and Vice Chair both have a conflict of interest, Amy Pryor/Giles Tofield will step in and Chair the meeting as they are impartial.[***Agreed by the Board***].People are here because they are interested and representative of activity in the area, and so they all have a conflict of interest to a certain degree. The Chair is signing up to be completely impartial, to speak publicly and to represent the FLAG: if any Board member is unhappy with any other Board member (incl. Chair) TEP and the MMO both have procedures in place to deal with the situation. There will always be a conflict of interest, by being on the Board you are saying you will put aside personal agendas and abide by the procedures. After we leave the EU we may not get any more funding, we need to work together and have trust in each other to work constructively towards maximizing this opportunity to improve the area for fisheries and beyond.

| Action items | Person responsible | Deadline |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Anna Patel to send out ToR, Code of Conduct, new member application form and member scoring with a feedback deadline of one weekRead drafts and outline any issues/points you have, these need to be signed ASAP because we cannot start working on projects without them. Send back to Anna Patel | Anna PatelAll Board members | 12/04/2017 |

Agenda topic Funding overview

***Summary***

**European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) Funding Outline**

The EMFF Scheme has an available budget of 92 million Euros for England, FLAGs are a part of that. Of the £800,000, we have £600,000 ring fenced directly for projects (and £200,000 for the management and administration, which includes the animation of the projects). We can also get access to core EMFF funding (MMO are encouraging us to access this as much as possible), so if a proposal fits both NTFLAG and core EMFF criteria, we can choose to put it through core EMFF to safeguard the NTFLAG budget (this will say NTFLAG non-funded project in the title, Anna can help with this). The advantage of going through FLAG route is that we are working in partnership with the MMO and therefore by the time projects are submitted, we will have helped you through any issues and there should be no reason for it to be turned down (note: Projects we are supporting need to find match funding, the applicant is responsible for this). If there is a project NTFLAG feels is unsuitable, but that fits core EMFF criteria, they can apply to EMFF and MMO have to consider it regardless of FLAG thoughts. Anna will sort through Expressions of Interest (EOI) and will bring them to the Board for approval/rejection.

**NTFLAG Local Development Strategy (LDS)**

The LDS has 5 priority areas, Amy Pryorreviewed these.

**Grants – Rates, applicants & project types**

EMFF funding has its own criteria (available on their website). What type of applicant you are denotes what funding is available to you: generally, public bodies can get up to 100%, private get 50% overall (if you are a collective you get 10% more: 60%); private small scale fishermen can get up to 80% overall. [**Anna** shows examples of what other FLAGs are doing, more examples are available online, and FARNET has examples throughout EU). Transparency initiative, when your project is approved, the MMO have to publish a short piece about it (just a one liner).

**EOI/ Application process; Board responsibility**

The application process is up to us, we just need to inform the MMO, Anna can send through info on other FLAGS and on the eligible funding, if wanted. [Anna takes us through the application process: after going through project and EOI Anna will bring to the Board for a quick decision on if/how it should be funded, successful projects will go onto an e-system set up by MMO where it will be checked and we will be provided feedback on any issues, 7-8 weeks for a decision on funding from core EMFF and 3-4 weeks for FLAG funding]. When you put an application in you need to include quotes and evidence of match funding, if it is over £25,000 a business case needs to be submitted as well (support can be provided for this). Core funding for the fishermen (e.g. for new fishing equipment) does not need to go through the Board, Anna can help them put applications in directly. We need to aim to commit and spend all the money in the first two years (because of Brexit). Once the e-system is up and running we can start processing applications.

**Project Criteria**

[Anna Patel takes us through FLAG criteria scoring criteria]. Our list of priorities have come out of meetings with FLAG Board members, anyone can put together a project, and Anna will help them put it through the system. [Board discussed various points of the criteria].

**Project Criteria**

***Questions, answers and statements***

**Q:** If they have no benefit to the area shouldn’t we turn it down? [***Board decides yes: if NTFLAG funding***, if still eligible for core funding then advise the applicant to apply directly].

**A:** Because it is area specific, core values of LDS should be determinant, not overall EMFF core values.

**Q:** If it is not relevant should we still support it?

**A:** Project dependent? If it is in line with LDS then it will benefit the area, if not then it might be more suitable for EMFF core.

**Q:** If something hits a 0, shouldn’t we look at if we can adjust the project a bit instead of refusing it?

**A:** We need to find the threshold where if it doesn’t receive a good enough score, we let it go. If it's not going to be suitable for FLAG funding it should be obvious from a low score. If something doesn't fit FLAG criteria but could give long term benefits, then we look at EMFF core.

**Q:** We need to run parallel with other projects like Coastal Community Teams.

**Q**: Engagement: are we talking about whole community engagement or engaging just a part of the community?

**A:** Depends if it is an engagement project or not. If not, we will be less concerned with community engagement as a criteria.

**General Discussion**

***Questions, answers and statements***

**Q:** Fishermen may not have time to submit applications due to losing days at sea, if a project needs more money or runs over will you have to pay the extra?

**A:** EU will not fund past what they have agreed with you to pay. They will never fund retrospectively and we can’t get the funding outside of the 3 years.

**Q:** in initial budget does funding allow you to have contingency within that? Usually you can ring-fence the surplus if you have evidence.

**A:** As this is EU funding not grant funding, projects cannot be carried over, you need evidence of all your spend E.g. EMFF will not accept wage slips, you need evidence the money has left the bank account. If you have enough money to front the costs, e.g. you had a 60,000 project, you get 40,000 from EMFF, and you can pay 5,000 to start the claims moving and to get the money coming in.

**Q:** Could this be a role for Leigh Port Partnership (LPP), to front money/draw money in?

**A:** It could be, that’s for LPP and the fishermen to decide.

**Communication**

***Questions, answers and statements***
**Q:** It is important to avoid the wrong information, keep it simple. Got to win support of local people.

**A:** FLAG Board need to be ambassadors and talk about this locally to get people to be involved.

**Q:** Website? Should we have our own? Or are we ok on TEP’s? (Less problems with maintenance) [***Board decision: use TEP’s***].

**Q:** Get local paper to link to website and links on Leigh-on-Sea and Leigh Twitter network, put together a paragraph to go with the link? Can we put links on local estate agents? Publicize at events with links to social media? And on Love Leigh website? Could we have a forum section?

**A:** Yes, all these things are possible.

**Training**

Giles Tofield mentioned that SBC are currently writing their Skills Strategy for Southend-On-Sea. It is worth aligning the NTFLAG skills with this. Giles Tofield/Anna Patel to email Nicola Mason with training & skills plans of the LDS.

| Action items | Person responsible | Deadline |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Detail on training in Stage 1 of the FLAG application to be pulled out and sent to Nicola Mason and Giles | Anna Patel/Giles Tofield | 14/04/2017 |
| Circulate project criteria for feedback | Anna Patel | 14/04/2017 |

Agenda topic Leigh Port infrastructure feasibility study

***Summary***

This is a specific project/priority for FLAG in LDS. Probably Southend-On-Sea Borough council will be the applicant, Giles, TEP and Emma Cooney have sorted out the partnership between SBC and TEP and this has gone through but SBC Cabinet but has been called it into Scrutiny. Assuming the issues are resolved we will go ahead with the first stage (feasibility study to be undertaken by Mott Macdonald) split into two stages because we won't know the cost of the work until we do the feasibility study. Evidence (including interviews with stakeholders) to come back to the Board and Council with preferred options highlighted. If we can get this started by July we hope to complete in October.

**General Discussion**

***Questions, answers and statements***

**Q:** For the Port of London Authority: are they reusing the silt with habitat recreation?

**A:** There are licensing issues there which are complicating this**.**

**A:** Mott Macdonald study should resolve these environmental issues. We are looking at sustainable solutions (such as self-scouring of the channels). We will create our first Management Group for this so that key stakeholders will be involved in the process. We want the port to survive as a port. This priority area is also for other infrastructure such as roads.

**Q:** Likely opposition from local people, so they need to understand what we’re trying to do: important sell.

**A:** We will simplify this message for the public and make sure it gets out there, technical solution but if we don't do it the impacts will be huge-fishermen won't be able to get in and out-cultural heritage at stake.

**Q**: What is the match funding?

**A:** SBC can get 75% funding as a local authority, total budget in excess of £80,000 to include match-funding from SBC staff management and any match from the work on the Shoreline Strategy. Three council departments involved in the FLAG (at least) all of which need to be included.

**Q:** Fishermen concerns are lack of space and moorings (at a reasonable price), management could look at the wider picture and how it integrates with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) strategies.

**A:** Critical to look at the Shoreline Strategy. Cheapest scenario might be beyond the budget that is why we are doing this in two stages so that if stage one says it is too expensive we won’t go ahead or we will find an alternative. No guarantee we can do this physical work within the 3 years, but it’s been a problem for so long, this is a chance to sort that out. Building a business case for a project of this size is important for securing any major investment. **S:** If it comes down to maintenance dredging we know MMO won’t fund it, but we could look at setting up another fund to deal with this issue.

**S**: The cost of removing siltation is going up all the time.

**Q:** So water injection?

**A:** Depends on the area etc. this is why we’re doing the study, because its complex. **S:** Defra came down (grant officer) they say maintenance can come under a quayside project. **S:** We need to make sure, whatever we do is a sustainable option.

| Action items | Person responsible | Deadline |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Setting up Management Groups (Environment/Infrastructure)  | Kes Scott-Somme/AP/GT/APr | ongoing |

Agenda topic Horizon scanning (for bringing up future opportunities) and any other business (AOB)

***Summary***

**Training -**Essex County Council starting to engage with Canvey Island Coastal Community Team, interested in traditional training and skills coming back in to the area such as boat building. Coastal Community Fund call out will be in Oct-Dec. Giles talked with the funders of Coastal Community Fund, particularly about culture and heritage, they would be interested in funding a physical building for training. What the Government look for is support from coastal community teams as part of the criteria.

**Training**

***Questions, answers and statements***

**Q:** Could coastal community teams work with apprenticeships? Does the council have targets?

**A:** Council developed apprenticeships for a previous Coastal Community Fund project in Southend, but don't have targets. **Q:** We need engineers, blacksmiths and carpenters and most importantly space. I’d love a building to train. But space to put it? There are environmental concerns being brought up by locals too, hope to get a project on this under FLAG.

**A:** See environmental monitoring section of LDS. We're trying to get an Environmental Meeting Group together. Those with concerns to join working groups

**Building in Leigh Library Gardens** - Council may be willing to remove asbestos from building to allow FLAG to have physical presence, to connect areas and create publicity, does the Board agree? [***Board: Yes***]. Would need to secure funding through FLAG and other sources to enable this and support the council.

**Building in Leigh Library Gardens**

***Questions, answers and statements***

**Q:** You used to not be able to take over old buildings, you had to build a new one?

**A:** We will check to see if there is money available to refit old buildings.

**Q:** Could FLAG fund a maritime museum?

**A:** Mixing heritage in with training, focus on specific projects to get things moving (not necessary to always focus on the building first) the project is more likely to last long term by building a training place. **Q:** Who would own the building? Not FLAG because we’re not an entity?

**A:** To be determined.

**Q:** Big sheds available on the marina for a training space? Maybe there?

 **A:** If you’re putting public money into a building you need to make sure it has a reasonable lifespan.

**Communications**

Regarding communication - can we get a press release out? Update on the new Chair/Vice Chair and interviews, getting the brand out, leafleting, and getting fishermen into local schools and colleges? [Claire to work with Kes on this] \*note: after general election, due to Purdah.

| Action items | Person responsible | Deadline |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Comms set up | Kes Scott-Somme& Claire Dumontier-Marriage. | Ongoing |
| Setting up Coastal Communities Fund Priorities  | Giles Tofield/CCT | over the summer |