

## **Notes from the joint meeting of the Seafish Board and Sector Panels held at Fishmonger's Hall in London on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2012**

### **A. Welcome & Introductions**

A.1 John Whitehead welcomed delegates to the meeting and announced that his successor as Chair of the Seafish Board had been named that morning as Elaine Hayes. Elaine will take up her post on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2013.

A.2 John then introduced the other eight members of the Seafish Board.

A.3 Apologies were received from:

- John Cox and Jim Portus from the Domestic & Exporting Panel;
- Brian Young Chair of the Importer and Processors Panel;
- Paul Vita and Dan Aherne from the Supply Chain and Consumer panel.

### **B. Role of the Board and the Panels**

B.1 Seafish Deputy Chair, Jane Ryder outlined the role of the Seafish Board as that of overall governance of the organisation responsible for the strategic direction and making decisions informed by the advice of the panels. The Board also has responsibility for internal control ensuring performance and delivery.

B.2 The Board is accountable to levy payers and Government and works within the expectations and operational constraints of its position as a public body. The Board must take account of proportionality of benefit, provide evidence of impact and value for money and must be transparent and fair. Decisions need to be evidence based.

B.3 While the three Panel Chairs sit on the Board they are not full Board members and as such do not have voting rights. They are however key stakeholder representatives and are a means of informing the Board. Panel Chairs and Panel members are key to feeding back to industry on Seafish delivery and performance.

B.4 Jane also reminded the meeting that the Board must take account of the regional perspective and the perspective given by the Seafish Expert Groups in forming their decisions.

### **C. Overview of Panel Meetings**

C.1 John Goodlad (Domestic), Simon Rilatt, standing in for Brian Young (Importers) and Chris Lamb (Supply Chain) gave an overview of their respective panel meetings:

C.2 John Goodlad acknowledged that this represented a huge and fundamental change in how Seafish works. Previously Seafish drew up plans and industry reacted. The new way turns this on its head with the Panels determining what they believe

Seafish should be doing resulting in costed plans being built from the bottom up as directed by industry.

C.3 The process involved was still new and a criticism was that the first two panel meetings were too close together however John noted the high degree of consensus between the panels and the mechanism by which the three Panel Chairs come together and bring the industry input to the heart of the Board works well.

C.4 John reported that the quality of members of the Domestic Panel is excellent bringing forward ideas of work areas for Seafish but he also argued that the Panel Members should be responsible for feeding back to industry and not simply rely on Seafish to do so.

C.5 Fishermen's Training was an area of conflict. This was seen as the first challenge to the process and it was imperative that a solution is found that is acceptable to all.

C.6 Neil Auchterlonie (Domestic) questioned the degree of commitment and resource being given to aquaculture. John Whitehead said that the Board had recognised that some key strategic activities were missing from the Panels' recommendations, continued support for the aquaculture sector being one. As a consequence the Board had ring-fenced a (small) budget for aquaculture support, although we are still considering what we can/should be doing to support this sector. Neil responded saying that he did not think that subsuming aquaculture support within the responsible sourcing work programme sent the right message and that what was needed was investment in the sector to maximise its huge potential.

C.7 Simon Rilatt (Importers) echoed the points that had been made by John Goodlad. He pointed out that the membership of the Panel was a group with a wide range of skills coming from both large and small businesses. At first the Importers & Processors Panel had an imbalance of importers but it has been addressed by the introduction of more processors interests to the panel.

C.8 Simon highlighted the common ground between panels: reputation, promoting consumption, responsible sourcing and importantly legislation. He reaffirmed the Importer Panel view that legislation horizon scanning is of the highest importance to the group and, as such, a Seafish presence in Brussels is seen as vitally important.

C.9 Simon pointed out that there is not sufficient levy income for Seafish to fund all the proposals and it is therefore important to get better "bang for the buck" by supplementing levy with income from other sources.

C.10 Chris Lamb (Supply Chain) felt that the Panel system adopted by Seafish is unique amongst levy boards and the decision to build a budget from the bottom up as advised by the industry panels is a brave one. While echoing the consensus between the Panels on the reputation, promotion, responsible sourcing and regulation workstreams he also reiterated the importance of Panel Members communicating with

industry. Chris reported that he believes the process to be very strong and that the input to Board meetings is highly valued.

## **D. Corporate Plan**

D.1 Paul Williams presented the Seafish Corporate Plan (presentation attached) that had recently been sent to Ministers for sign off – hopefully before the end of the year.

D.2 Paul explained that the Panels must now monitor the progress being made by Seafish against the Corporate Plan and input into the ongoing process of ensuring that Corporate Plan (and the work programmes) is relevant and appropriate.

D.3 John Butterwith (Domestic) asked Paul how Seafish plan to get better media coverage. Paul explained that a number of journalists would be targeted. This would include arranging meetings with journalists who are traditionally critical of commercial fishing to provide them with up to date data and information. Seafish will also identify a group of younger up and coming journalists and ensure that they are fully informed and to encourage them to be balanced in their reporting of the industry. John Butterwith advised that any promotion of consumption must be linked to species availability.

D.4 Jane Sandell (Domestic) asked for copies of the slides from the presentations at today's meeting and commented that panel members need information on delivery and spend profiles, if the Panels are to be effective in monitoring progress. Jane also commented that Seafish must liaise more closely with industry on responsible sourcing issues (buyers have very technical requirements), but that Seafish was going in the right direction regarding data deficiency.

D.5 Dale Rodmell (Domestic) commented that the plan was missing the technical work that Seafish undertakes in helping industry adapt and change to issues and legislative requirements. Paul Williams advised that a resource for gear technology work had been maintained and reminded everyone that this is a rolling corporate plan – a starting point with opportunities for regular review and amendment.

D.6 Neil Auchterlonie (Domestic) supported the Brussels horizon scanning post and asked whether their brief would include aquaculture. Paul Williams replied that because the bulk of aquaculture legislation is aimed at the freshwater species and as Seafish receive no levy from this sector it would not be a priority.

D.7 Mark Drummond (Supply Chain) was concerned that there was no mention of foodservice in Paul's presentation. Paul confirmed that while he had not mentioned it, it was included in the Corporate Plan.

D.8 Martin Boyers (Domestic) was concerned that ports were not included in the Corporate Plan. He also raised the concern of MPAs and the impacts that NGOs are having on the seas. Seafish are very aware of the proliferation of NGOs and will continue to influence and provide Government with information to inform the debate on MPAs. Martin also raised the issue of accessing EFF (and EMFF) funding and asked

whether Seafish would offer assistance to industry in doing so. Jane Ryder replied that the EFF (and EMFF) is administered by the MMO (and the devolved administrations) and that joint working on this between Seafish and the MMO is being discussed.

D.9 Neil Auchterlonie (Domestic) commented that whilst aquaculture assessment is in the plan, this work is not really advancing the sector.

D.10 Simon Rilatt (Importers) commented that aquaculture is mainly salmon and freshwater species, which do not attract levy. Therefore it was not necessarily appropriate for Seafish to be heavily involved in this sector.

D.11 Peter Stagg (Importers) asked if Seafish will support the Billingsgate Seafood Training School's schools outreach programme on promoting seafood consumption. Karen Galloway advised that she will be talking to the School's Director about this.

D.12 Ian Gatt (Domestic) expressed the opinion that Seafish and industry must keep up the momentum on the Brussels post. Paul Williams explained that he would be speaking with Robert Matthews at DEFRA next week, but is hopeful that permission will be given to recruit a person to fill the post (albeit that in the first instance this may have to be on a time limited basis).

D.13 Jim Evans (Domestic) is concerned that the MPA work that Seafish has been involved in will cease as it does not appear in any workstream. Paul Williams assured Jim that this will be taken up by the Seafish regional staff. Jon Harman commented that he was chairing an internal meeting on Thursday with Mark Gray and Seafish regional staff to start the ball rolling on this. Paul Williams stated that industry would have the opportunity to review how effectively this is working at the next Sector Panel meetings in May.

## **E. Proportionality**

E.1 An overview of the issue of proportionality was presented by Paul Williams (presentation attached).

E.2 John Rutherford (Supply Chain) congratulated Paul on his presentation and said that it was a principle of fairness. John asked for transparency on how Seafish calculate proportionality internally.

E.3 Martin Boyers (Domestic) commented that Seafish should provide benefit for the whole of the industry and not just a specific area of industry.

## **F. Fishermen's Safety**

F.1 The fishermen's safety workstream was the most controversial outcome from the three panel meetings. While all three panels accepted that it was an important issue, there was a difference of opinion between the panels on who is responsible for fishing

safety, who should be coordinating fishermen's training and how this work should be funded.

F.2 Simon Potten presented an overview of the issues and explained how Seafish plans to undertake the review (see attached slides). It is intended that the review be completed January-April 2013 so that the results can be presented to the Sector Panels at the next round of meetings in May.

F.3 Derek Cardno (Scottish Fishermen's Federation) said industry welcomed the review and asked whether, once the review is completed there will be a long term plan. Derek advised that in countries that adopted a five to ten year approach to fishermen's safety, tangible improvements in safety can be seen.

F.4 To evidence what industry is doing itself, Derek advised that the Scottish Fishermen's Federation is putting the finishing touches to an EFF project aimed at providing every Scottish fisherman with a personal flotation device (PFDs) and hopes that Seafish will support this initiative. *(note: the NFFO has already submitted an EFF application to make 1,000 PFDs available to fishermen at a heavily subsidised rate).* Derek also advised that a Modern Apprenticeship programme for fishermen in Scotland will be launched next week. He said Seafish's help in getting this had been invaluable. The Seafish 3-week Introduction to Commercial Fishing course is a pre-entry requirement for the Modern Apprenticeship, so continued support for this course is essential.

F.5 Mike Park (Seafish Board) commented that it should not be a case of continuing to do the same old thing. The aim must be to reduce the number of fishermen fatalities. Fishing safety is a reputational issue for the whole seafood industry.

F.6 John Rutherford (Supply Chain) was of the opinion that the review panel would benefit from the addition of an expert on health and safety law or employment law on it. John also stated that Government should be funding work on improving fishing safety.

F.7 Ian Gatt (Domestic) said that the Scottish fishing industry recognised the need for it to contribute to safety; this is being evidenced by funding from the Scottish Fishermen's Trust to the PFD application. Ian commented that the Scottish Fishermen's Federation was focused on making the boat a safer platform to work on and that training is best done by a body like Seafish.

## **G. Seafood Marketing**

G.1 Independent consultant, Daniel Clare gave a presentation (attached) on generic marketing, using examples of campaigns run for Scottish meat and milk.

G.2 Mike Park (Seafish Board) asked what was the cost of the Quality Meat Scotland and Scottish Milk initiatives. Daniel Clare responded that it was approximately £2m over 18 months for the milk campaign.

G.3 Mike Mitchell (Supply Chain) asked what was the return on investment. Daniel Clare responded that the milk campaign had covered its cost and that the Quality Meat Scotland campaign had won awards for its return on investment. Actual ROI figures were unavailable due to commercial sensitivities.

G.4 Peter Stagg (Importers) said that fish is proving very difficult to sell at the moment. It is highly priced and industry needs a marketing campaign now, but that this should be below the line. Online promotion is a huge opportunity. It is increasingly where people turn to for information or recipes; Seafish needs a presence; it is less expensive; please get on with it!

G.5 Jane Sandell (Domestic) countered that fish was not expensive in Scotland; Seafish should be touching on every one of the suggested below the line approaches, however, it needs more thought and discussion to determine the precise detail. Dominic Collins (Importers) advised that input from multiple retailers is necessary. Karen Galloway agreed but said that whilst Seafish does quite well in getting to the seafood buyers, it really needs to work on promotional activities with category marketing contacts.

G.6 Catherine Pazderka (Supply Chain) said that BRC will happily contact its members to help identify and recruit the right contacts from within the multiple retailers for Seafish to work with.

G.7 Steve Norton (Importers) commented that he expects to see some deflation in prices. We need to move the current consumption from 1.2 portions a week to 2.0; the 2-a-week and schools promotions activities are essential.

G.8 Peter Hajipieris (Seafish Board) advised that, in his experience, generic promotion of "fish" the brand will have a domino effect throughout the whole industry.

G.9 Mike Mitchell (Supply Chain) reminded everyone that Seafish is not a "marketing board". We have identified a wide variety of potential marketing activities, but there is a limited pot of money available. This all needs very serious consideration - a £2m promotional campaign to create a £2m increase sales is not good enough and if that is all that is being proposed, Young's would rather have its levy back, as it can make much better use of its share.

G.10. Karen Galloway then updated the meeting on key activities on the Promoting Consumption workstream that are currently underway including schools initiatives in NELincs and London together with a health challenge around omega-3 and the 2 a week message which would be launched in February 2013.

## **H. Meeting close**

H.1. John Whitehead thanked the Board, Panels and industry for their support over the last 10 years and wished Elaine Hayes well in her new post.

H.2. On behalf of industry, John Rutherford thanked John Whitehead for his role as chair.

Meeting close