

**Devon & Severn Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority
Full Authority Meeting
18th March 2021**

Byelaw and Permitting Sub-Committee Report March 2021

At time of writing, the draft minutes from the last Byelaw and Permitting Sub-Committee (B&PSC) Meeting (25th February 2021) are not complete. This information items informs members of the Authority about recent developments.

The use of zoom has continued to provide the platform for B&PSC meetings. The agendas for virtual meetings have been reduced in size to recognise the amount of discussion and decision making that it is possible to achieve in a more limited time frame of approximately two hours per meeting.

For full transparency, all papers produced for the B&PSC can be read on D&S IFCA's website and this written update has incorporated embedded information (hyperlinks) for those reading in electronic format. Although the decision making of the B&PSC drives the byelaw review work, its delivery is also dependent on internal officer discussions, planning, preparation of reports and multiple communication requirements.

The B&PSC meeting on 25th February 2021 focussed on two main agenda items:

- The Scallop Closed Season (July, August & September)
- The Review of the Live Wrasse Pot Fishery

The Scallop Closed Season.

The B&PSC actioned officers on 17th August 2020 to undertake an informal and "open" type of "Have Your Say" consultation to seek the views of stakeholders regarding the existing scallop closed season. This restriction applies to both commercial fishers with a Category One (At Sea) Mobile Fishing Permit and those with a Category One Diving Permit. Officers were also actioned to collate available research including information on spawning seasons.

The B&PSC were presented with a report on 25th February 2021 that detailed the responses received during the consultation and other relevant information collated by officers. Multiple options for potential change were highlighted by stakeholders. Officers considered the response and other relevant factors which were translated into the officer's recommendation as follows:

That Formal Consultation is undertaken with a view to amendments to Category One Diving Permit Conditions authorising commercial divers to remove scallops from defined areas within the District during July, August, and September.

Officers set out how, in their view, diving permits could be amended to achieve greater access for commercial divers within the framework of existing diving permit conditions whilst recognising that the potential changes must be enforceable. The officer's recommendation for potential change would have formed the basis of the final phase of consultation before a final decision would be taken by the B&PSC following presentation of those findings.

Outcome:

The B&PSC did not formulate an alternative suggestion for changes to management that could have formed the basis of formal consultation.

The B&PSC did not agree with the officers' recommendation to conduct a final phase of consultation. (10 against & 2 abstentions)

Hyper Links:

- [B&PSC Minutes \(17th August 2020\)](#)
- [B&PSC Report – Scallop Closed Season \(10th Feb 2021\)](#)

The Review of the Live Wrasse Pot Fishery

A fishery for the live capture of wrasse for use as cleaner fish in Scottish salmon farms developed in the Devon and Severn Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority's (D&S IFCA's) District in 2015. Management was introduced in 2017 via D&S IFCA's Potting Permit Byelaw. Since the management measures were first introduced, they have been regularly reviewed and adapted based on evidence derived from fishery observer surveys in D&S IFCA's District, particularly regarding catch per unit effort (CPUE: fish per pot) and landings per unit effort (LPUE: fish per pot within the Conservation Reference Size limits).

At the meeting on 25th February 2021, the B&PSC were presented with two separate documents as follows:

- [Review of the Live Wrasse Fishery in Devon and Severn IFCA's District 2017-2020 V1.](#)
- [Summary Report for the B&PSC – Annual Review of the Live Wrasse Fishery in D&S IFCA's District 2017-2020.](#)

The summary report included four separate officers' recommendations. A Power Point presentation was provided to members which also highlighted that one of the recommendations had been amended since production of the reports.

The revised recommendations presented at the B&PSC meeting were as follows:

- 1. Continue to manage the fishery as outlined in the D&S IFCA's Policy Statement and Potting Permit Conditions for the Live Wrasse Fishery (24th June 2020), except in the case of rock cook (2, below) and ballan wrasse (3, below), and except with regards to fishers returns forms (4, below).**
- 2. Lift the prohibition on removal of rock cook from the fishery and reintroduce previous conservation reference size (CRS) limits of 12-23cm.**
- 3. Change the ballan wrasse CRS range from 15–23 cm to 18–26 cm.**
- 4. Remove the requirement for wrasse fishers to submit returns forms.**

Outcome:

The B&PSC agreed to recommendation 1 with an amendment that the words "12 months" be included. (11 in favour and 1 abstention)

The second recommendation did not get proposed or seconded by a B&PSC member and as a result there was no vote on this recommendation and the prohibition will continue.

The third recommendation was agreed by the B&PSC (All in favour)

The fourth recommendation was agreed by the B&PSC (8 in favour and 4 against)

Additional Information for members:

A Guide to the work of the B&PSC can be read [here](#).

End.