



Governance Working Group (GWG)

Review of Communications Strategy & Delivery – Dec 2022:

Officers' response to some initial questions raised by the GWG

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Note: This report is not intended to be published – it is only for internal use by Members and Officers to help with this review of communications by way of the GWG discussions.

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Background

On 29th November D&S IFCA's Governance Working Group (GWG) began discussions on a review D&S IFCA's Communication Strategy & Delivery Plan. The existing Communications Strategy (developed in 2018) has been circulated to all Members via email, is available to read on the D&S IFCA Website ([Resource Library – G](#) and within the secure Members area – GWG page) and can also be read [here](#).

The Chair of the GWG (Pam Buchan) has set up a Miro Board (an electronic type of “white board”), that Members can choose to use to add information and ideas. To use Miro, you will need to register for a free account. A tutorial is available as you set up an account. This is a [link](#) to the GWG Communications Miro Board. This mini report may also help you note your own thoughts, ideas, and suggestions in preparation for the GWG meetings.

The next meeting of the GWG will be used to continue discussions on communications. A doodle poll was circulated 2nd December 2022 with a view to the next meeting being held week beginning 16th January 2023.

Questions raised at the last GWG meeting

A selection of questions/points were raised in the last GWG meeting. Some of the questions have depth to them which is why Officers have tried to answer in some detail. This mini report hopefully addresses many of them (if Officers have understood the questions correctly) and the answers may lead to new ideas for the Miro board and/or questions/ideas at the next GWG meeting.

1. How has the communication plan been used and referred to by officers since 2018?

Answer:

The Communication Plan has established a framework for our communications (rather than a “go to” reference document). Our communication work is self-sufficient (no out-sourced service provider assistance) and (in the view of Officers) efficient in how we approach a lot of it. Our website does deliver the bullet points on page 9 of the Communications Plan – how effectively is a discussion point.

Our communications are based around key (broad) aims and delivery that is relative to our resources. Key aims/objectives include the following:

- a) Raise brand awareness of D&S IFCA – what we are responsible for and what we do on a national and local level
- b) To enhance the reputation of the Authority

- c) Continue to recognise our key audiences and maintain a contacts data base
- d) Engage effectively with all stakeholders on a variety of platforms to ensure comprehensive accessibility
- e) Encourage input from Stakeholders, Communities, and individuals for the development of fisheries management
- f) Facilitate a greater understanding of the marine environment and the role of D&S IFCA in its management
- g) Encourage confidence and support for the activities of D&S IFCA, working in partnership with others
- h) Identify issues affecting our stakeholders and find shared solutions to these issues
- i) Demonstrate the success of our work by promoting reasoned outcomes from consultation, compliance, enforcement, and research work of the D&S IFCA
- j) Demonstrate the success of our work by promoting reasoned outcomes from consultation, compliance, enforcement, and research work of the D&S IFCA
- k) To monitor and review the effectiveness of the Communication Strategy and Delivery Plan and adapt when required

Messages & D&S IFCA's Vision

Within the aims – raising brand awareness and highlighting what we are responsible for and what we do locally and nationally links to a lot of the communications – in different ways. For example, our vision (for our own IFCA) was developed since 2018 and is currently not set out within our Communications Strategy but is a factor in our communications – you could say the vision already recognises our approach to some of our communications.

D&S IFCA Vision:

We believe in shared responsibility for the health and benefits of the marine environment and uphold our duties, now and in the future. We will be proactive in our management to restore and recover marine ecosystems, habitats and species. We envisage that the waters, under our authority, will support sustainable fishing practices serving local, national and international communities. We will innovate, and champion the use of technology, the delivery of low impact fisheries and the UK Government's 'Net Zero' by 2050 carbon target. We embrace co-management and will drive change in inshore recreational and commercial fisheries, recognising their social and economic benefits, and securing a future for sustainable fishing in the coastal belt.

This vision plays a part in the work we do and the communications that form part of our work. How we operate as an organisation is captured within the vision. For communications this could include:

- better use of digital communications (technology)
- virtual meetings
- an attempt to go more paperless (to help the environment at large)
- etc

Delivery

Delivery wise, the development and upkeep of our current website has a relationship with some of the aims. For example, transparency with information, proof of success/delivery by way of publishing ([Resource Library](#)). A range of display pages to inform stakeholders about our role with the marine environment, fisheries legislation, our enforcement activity, meetings, and news (flexible content depending on requirements) and more.

The need for a website and the review of its content forms part of Defra's High-Level Objectives (HLOs) – "IFCAs are recognised and heard, whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders".

Defra HLO includes:

- *The IFCA will maintain its website, ensuring public access to current fisheries and conservation information for the District, including management requirements and byelaws. Non-reserved IFCA Committee papers will be published.*

The communication plan is interlinked with the permit-based byelaw model which has enabled an internal data base of fishers to be developed on a small number of excel spreadsheets – 8 groups – commercial and recreational fishers conducting a mix of fishing methods.

In addition to fishers, D&S IFCA has an excel master contact data base that contains our own Members and other contacts (stakeholders) that include anglers, conservation groups, university contacts, estuary forums, press contacts, Defra, MMO, other IFCAs, and the general public, that have subscribed to receive information. Although the master contact data base has some separation of groups, targeted communication is limited and is typically confined to "Permit Holders" (per group or all together), Members, or everyone else (a large collection of emails for use with Mail Chimp, that includes Permit Holders, the public and Members).

Questions from Officers:

- a) Would Members ideally prefer us to further develop our master contact base with a view to more separation of groups and to target communications to more of the groups or a combination of groups?*
- b) Would Members want to always be included in all direct communication – so they are more informed about all topics?*

Aims & Non-Achievements

The range of communications undertaken does relate to the existing Communications Strategy & Delivery Plan (page 8) and Part 2 & 3 of the existing Communications Strategy & Delivery Plan is focussed on delivery and measuring success.

Some elements of delivery and measuring success are not being achieved at this time in full:

- Officers do attend meetings and events – but not all that we may be expected by some to attend – this is a resource & prioritising issue
- Our interaction with the press is limited
- We do not achieve the reporting requirements set out on page 11 of the current Communications Plan
- We do not achieve all the key performance indicators on page 12 of the current Communications Plan

D&S IFCA E-Newsletter – "Inshore Insights"

The past D&S IFCA communications outsourced service provider recommended the development of an E-Newsletter to be circulated in a Mail Chimp format, and the content is firstly developed in word and both a word and pdf version can also be utilised. Its creation was reliant on Officers to develop the content of the E-Newsletter. The creation of and the availability of D&S IFCA E-Newsletters was included in the MMO recruitment pack (2020) for selecting new Members for D&S IFCA (MMO appointed Members).

The E-newsletter was typically a merge of existing news items and was about 4 to 5 pages long. It started as a quarterly e-newsletter, then went to six-monthly circulation, and at this time is no longer produced. It could be resurrected if Members choose. To create it there

obviously needs to be a certain volume of news produced by Officers – varied content for interest to our collective and mixed audience. The last version was created in November 2020.

The past E-Newsletters typically included a mixture of topics, divided into the following sections:

- Our Headline News
- Engagement (opportunities)
- Information about permits and how to get one
- Environment News
- Enforcement News
- Previous news - headlines (with links to archived news to view/download)



Un-Subscription – Mailing Lists

Unfortunately, there have been examples where, although our volume of directly circulated information is modest, a range of people have chosen to un-subscribe from our mailing lists.

Some of these un-subscribers are surprising as they can be organisations with an interest in our work and, in the past, have included one of our own Authority Members.

Un-subscription must and is recognised; however, this becomes an administration burden – it does require modification of lists and presents further complications due to a requirement by D&S IFCA to consult/engage with Permit Holders on some matters, but not all matters/topics.

2. Is an engagement plan the same as a communication plan? Make an engagement strategy for the communication plan to be mapped into?

Answer:

Officers don't fully understand the question, so this may be the wrong answer. The need for engagement on different topics is driven by the overarching work as set out in the Annual Plans, but how we approach elements of the work has become more consistent.

We don't have anything separate (documentation); however, we do tend to follow repeatable processes for aspects of our work – e.g. "Call for Information", "Have Your Say", "Formal Consultation".

Although the actual engagement platforms can be different e.g., a Mailchimp circular, questionnaires, an event to collect thoughts/views, this is all backed up with preparation often in written format – and updated website displays. This repeatable format and a written base, enables quality assurance related to the topics/questions and for the use of privacy notices (collection/storage and use of personal data). The website page - "[Engagement & Have Your Say](#)" forms part of engagement work and the page used to display a range of information for engagement work – current and completed work.

Templates have been developed that cover engagement work – such as information collected as part of "Fishing Activity Surveys" or Byelaw and Permit Condition pre-consultation/formal consultation. Written preparation of material can then be used in more than one way – developed for news (to highlight opportunity), posted on the website and Facebook, directly circulated (email and hard copy), used as reference by Officers attending a meeting, events, or at a surgery session where visitors can engage with us face to face.

Depending on the work required, different phases will come into play – scoping – followed by more structured topics/proposals etc. There is often more than one phase of engagement driven by process to implement something new, new management, new permit conditions etc.

For example, the recent change in Category One Diving Permits (to provide greater access to remove scallop in the summer months) included multiple phases of engagement over approximately 2 years – split by decision making of the B&PSC – becoming more focussed as we went and ending with defined proposed changes to permits (Formal Consultation).

Depending on decision making – the phases can be shortened. For some work such as making a new Byelaw, formal process (set by Defra) must be achieved – it is.

3. Is the stakeholder mapping on p6 current? Most of those on p7 aren't on p6 map.

Answer:

Although it is broad, the map/diagram on page 6 is a reasonable indication of our stakeholders. Some of the groups could easily be broken down further such as recreational fishers – into recreational potters, netters, and divers. Partner organisations set out on page 7, could easily be added to the map/diagram on page 6. Although we can identify multiple groups to communicate with, our current approach to managing the contact details (and then communicating directly with written output) is not divided as heavily.

4. Review aims and objective – what are our statutory functions and how are they articulated in the A&Os? E.g., how is co-development of management captured in the plan? What do we then want to do additionally?

Answer:

Yes, we can review our aims and objectives and add more detail into the Communications Strategy document regarding our Statutory Functions if this is the question? We do have an

[“About Us”](#) page on our website that is focussed on explaining our core work that comes from MaCAA 2009 and other display pages on the website or where appropriate in documented information emphasise this. Our communications are built around our Statutory Functions – focussed more on our functions (core work), rather than branching out too much out beyond that – to wider issues, for example health and safety of fishers, pollution, climate change etc.

Development of management has different elements such as the collection of evidence, conducting research, sharing information, discussion, and taking advice – for example with some of the groups set out on the stakeholder map e.g., experts in the field, Natural England and those currently listed as Partner Organisations – Universities, project partners etc. Attending meetings, sharing of views and information is part of communication.

“Co-development of management” is part of developing management. It is probably not as clear as it could be at present within the Communications Strategy; however, seeking information and exchange of information (communication in different forms and with different audiences) helps to potentially achieve the goal (Statutory Duties) to balance the needs of those wanting to exploit sea fisheries resources and balancing that activity with the protection of the marine environment.

An example of developing Co-Management could be the work undertaken by Plymouth University (FISH INTEL Project) – engagement and questionnaires completed by fishers which then help to inform our Fisheries Research & Management Plans.

Byelaw type of work does often involve extensive consultation (Have Your Say or Call for Information) which is a large part of our communications, backed up with documented work and factual content. The flexible permit model (that includes a trigger mechanism for review of conditions) allows for potential changes to be considered based on evidence provided by fishers – this is another form of co-management. Fishers and other stakeholders can engage and have influence in our (B&PSC) decision making.

Sharing information is part of our engagement – a range of issues that may affect stakeholders – sharing documented work and Officer attendance at different and relevant meetings.

What to do differently?

There is scope for additional engagement, for example greater attendance at more meetings or events (with a view to Co-Management), sometimes getting D&S IFCA better recognised and getting a greater volume of invitations to participate in meetings, events, and workshops; however, it can become a resource issue or a prioritising issue – getting the balance right.

5. Methods – what has changed since covid? How can we better use digital? Where are we over-relying on digital?

Answer:

From a communications perspective some key changes since Covid-19 include:

Officers home working – different internal communications – greater use of Zoom/Microsoft Teams for team meetings. Separation of staff away from collective office environment presents some challenges and some detachment.

Formal meetings must continue to be held in person (Authority & B&PSC) as this is the same for Local Authority meetings. A period of relaxation was provided during Covid-19 but not extended by Central Government. In person meetings present higher costs and have some

advantages and disadvantages. This Public have opportunity to attend all formal meetings (in person or virtual) – some may have preferred virtual to avoid travel, some may prefer a physical location to observe, or (following protocol) to ask questions.

Working Groups have benefitted from virtual meetings – e.g., increased flexibility and this could generate more attendance. Virtual meetings have helped with organising meetings with Defra for funding.

Since Covid-19 more stakeholders have become more accustomed to using technology/ virtual meetings – some may expect this to now be normal.

Methods: Other than virtual meetings, a lot has not changed – for example a lot of our communications have relied on digital/electronic formats since development of the Communications Strategy in 2018.

Over-reliance: This is for Members/stakeholders to determine; however, there are resource/cost and logistical implications associated with more traditional communications – printing, attending events, attending workshops, posters/flyers, surgery sessions, meetings in person etc.

6. Social Media – which platforms, how to connect without too much effort?

Answer:

Officers are not experts in using social media – there are lots of platforms and how they are effectively used by experts in communications is different to our more basic approach. If the question relates to D&S IFCA – re-sharing information generated by others – it is done, but very much depends on content and value to our stakeholders (in connection to our core working functions).

We don't spend time hunting for sharable information that has a tenuous link to our work and sometimes information that has no strong link to our work is not shared. For example, we would not prioritise managing and sharing information about a health & safety drive for fishers to wear life jackets or necessarily post a video if a pod of dolphins was spotted in Torbay (without a stronger link to other work).

Our current social media (other than the website) is basically Facebook and Twitter. Our use of Facebook consists of re-posting information already set up (and quality assured) for use on our website. This approach is as time efficient as we can get it.

Although – “headlines” are sometimes placed on the Twitter feed, this is not a regular thing at present. To help with communications, the Finance and Administration manager posts information on Facebook in between other duties. There is possibly more scope for us to use Twitter more than we do at present – it would be taking main messages already generated and tweeting that – with “read more” on the message.

Greater and more effective use of social media would involve Officer training, time to implement change and conduct different work, financial investment or a combination of all of these.

7. Press Strategy – When and how to engage.

Answer:

There is not a strategy in place that is focussed solely on the press. We do have press contacts for Fishing News and Fishing Daily that do interact with us (more so recently). We have reached out to other press contacts but with minimal interest shown in our work or “news” first hand – from us.

Officers have used their judgement or direction from Members about what information (news) to send to the press to avoid them being overloaded with information unlikely to generate much interest.

For example – recent news sent to the press included a news item about Remote Electronic Monitoring (new technology that may help fisheries management) and the development of Byelaws. We did not send information (news) to the press about the completion of a mussel survey in one estuary that linked to a stock assessment report of the findings.

Officers are capable of developing news in a more traditional type of “press release”; however, our templates are set up more for short, factual types of News – maybe considered as a “news brief”? Our news may be considered “neutral” as we prepare it with a mix of stakeholders/interests in mind.

Because of this approach, our news is not always in a style that suits all journalists – it is not opinion focussed or dominated by quotations; rather it is factual, often broken into sections – what have we done, why we have or are doing it, what are the key elements – what are the next steps or the outcome – find out more, visit our website, get involved etc.

The Fishing Daily publish exactly what is sent to them – that is their policy. The Fishing News have sought additional information to go with the original news we have sent – an extra quote for example and have done an element of re-assembling of the information sent to them.

On occasions if an issue emerges, we will create a news item (official press) but this often takes longer and can have risks if it gets too opinionated or risks associated with sending the wrong message to a particular group. On occasions, because of press interest (press finding issues from other sources), we are asked to react and create a news item. We can choose the best type of language/format depending on the issue.

8. Website – can be considered as achieved. Any reflections?

Answer:

Our existing website was designed and introduced around the same time as the Communications Strategy was being developed (late 2017 – early 2018). Having a website is essential and meets Defra’s HLOs. Officers had input into its design with some key aims as set out in the Communications Strategy.

Such as:

- To be effective and efficient in terms of cost and officer time spent managing the communications – (updates and managing content is done internally wherever possible)
- To inform stakeholders & members about our work - via a range of display pages, a library and news feed

- To be an interactive publication scheme for the organisation (Resource Library)
- To link communications to the Annual Plan and documented tasks
- To fully integrate with face book & twitter
- To encourage stakeholder engagement and potential subscription to e-newsletters

Although its implementation of the current website is complete, obviously the content of the website grows and changes very frequently. The Resource Library is D&S IFCA's Publication Scheme (Policy) and the transparency with information made available interlinks with D&S IFCA's Freedom of Information Policy. Having certain items available (published) in the public domain meets Defra's HLOs – e.g., minutes from Authority meetings.

There is freedom to amend the display pages to reflect changes in the work or items (& links) on display. Officers welcome feedback from Members and Stakeholders regarding how information is arranged. Recently Members suggested an additional page for "Useful Links" – this was added. Members have also requested that different information (such as funding correspondence with Defra) be added to the private "secure" members Area – this has been done. There have been mixed reviews from time to time from Stakeholders about the content and ease of finding information – good and bad. The on-line permit application facility is a must have – an expectation now – although its functionality (e.g. setting information fields for data entry) is controlled by the website host – Boost Digital.

The future:

The website has served us well; however, it is running on old technology – The "search" function on the website doesn't function as it should, internal updates by Officers get clogged up and there are sometimes issues relating to the payment of Permits via the on-line application facility. The system is PHP5.6 which means that Boost Digital (website host) are unable to build the appropriate tools needed to rectify a range of emerging errors/issues. Boost Digital have recommended that a new website be developed with updated software – the cost is likely to be **£2000 - £3000**. A new build would enable both Members and Officers to have an input into the design and style – however Officers would recommend the inclusion of both the publication scheme (Library – including a transfer of information to a new site) and a permit application facility.

9. Reporting – Statistics

- ***What do numbers really mean for understanding how effective our communication is?***
- ***Is reach sufficient?***
- ***How can we assess the quality of our comms approaches delivering on the aims and objectives? Basic numbers don't do that.***
- ***How do we actually evaluate against aims?***

Answer:

The answer is that Officers are not entirely convinced when it comes to using statistics as a measuring tool. The original measuring statistics were collated by an outsourced service provider and presented to Members each quarter at Authority Meetings in a bundle:

- Communication Quarterly Report
- Communication Group Report
- Communication Facebook Report

- Communication Twitter Report

The ¼ report would highlight the numbers of news items and press releases issued, report on circulation of an e-newsletter, and set out headline statistics for Facebook and Twitter:

- Impressions (visitations)
- Engagements (reactions, comments, shares, re-tweets, replies)
- Facebook (Number of followers and % increase/decrease each quarter)

The Group Report was generated by “Spout social” and had further detailed statistical information – as set out on page 11 of the current Communications Strategy. Similar detailed statistics were set out in “Spout Social” reports focussed on Facebook and Twitter.

Current Status - Reporting Statistics and Evaluation:

The reports and statistics that were presented generated little interest from Members and at Authority meetings they were typically “taken as read”. Officers no longer attempt to compile these types of detailed statistics for ¼ Authority meetings or for any other purpose; however, this can be done if Members want it done.

- We don’t know our “reach” measured in this way.
- Our level of subscription for e-newsletters is now irrelevant as currently we no longer produce a regular e-newsletter “Inshore Insights”.
- We do have a general idea of website page visitation from Google Analytics – with the news feed, permit application facility and then the Enforcement pages typically the most popular areas of our website.
- We do know how many Mailchimp emails (direct circulation) are opened by our contacts (from about 1500 contacts on database).

Success for different elements of communication can be difficult to evaluate. For example, a low consultation response may be an indication that the topic is less controversial. Opportunity to respond is provided but not always taken; however, is that a sign of under achievement?

Verbal comments and feedback is explored in the next question/answer. Officers would welcome ideas and thoughts from Members how to better evaluate the effectiveness of our communications, balanced against the aims. The GWG discussions will be of use for this.

10. How are ad hoc feedback/comments/concerns etc used to inform our aims and objectives also?

What is the complaints strategy?

Can we add FOI EIR into the new strategy (or policy) in summary so people can look at it and see what it does and how?

Answer:

Feedback is often mixed but often along the lines of:

“We don’t know what the IFCA does - we didn’t hear about that – no one told me about that - you were not at the meeting – I couldn’t find the information”

Comments on Facebook can also be negative at times – laughter symbols, poking fun, questioning the work etc. We do get some “thumbs up”, but as a regulator, some negativity surrounding our messages and completed work is to be expected. To date the types of comments received have not had much major influence on how we operate other than things like these examples:

- Some news items, particularly of an enforcement nature, have been cut back – for example details of patrols and outcomes
- Some information on the website has been moved around to potentially help get it noticed
- The Publication Scheme (and the transparency with information it offers) has been more heavily promoted

FOI and EIR pose a risk, due to the time taken to process those requests. It was hoped that the website resource library (a robust publication scheme) could reduce the number of FOI and EIR requests and this may be the case as stakeholders can self-serve a huge range of information. The D&S IFCA FOI Policy highlights the need for, and value of, having the Publication Scheme and in some cases the freely available information may satisfy a request for information. The Publication Scheme can provide an Exemption to Freedom of Information Requests.

Complaints

We don't have a strategy for dealing with complaints, but we do have a complaints procedure which is broad in nature – it covers all elements of our service. Our FOI Policy is published, but possibly not that easy to find – it is in Section D of our Library, along with some other relatively dry but required content, such as our Data Protection Policy.

11. Role of Members in Communications

Answer:

Members have an important part to play in our communications – the MMO recruitment of Members highlights the following (a recruitment pack 2020):

- Excellent communication and verbal reasoning skills
- Knowledge and experience in a relevant sector, such as commercial and recreational fishermen, environmental groups and marine researchers
- Ability to disseminate legislation, regulations and decisions in easy-to-understand language and promote to the local community

For Members to be better placed to achieve those elements, the following is important as set out in the MMO recruitment pack 2020:

- Regularly attend quarterly committee meetings
- Take part in sub-committee meetings to advise on specific issues as and when necessary
- Ensure you allocate time to adequately prepare for a committee or sub committee
- View information on the Devon and Severn IFCA's website and utilise the members' area for meetings papers and information documents
- Attend training briefings to help you in your role
- Represent your committee at other meetings or events where the need arises

There are deficiencies relating to the above points which can be discussed by the GWG. Training (briefings to help in the role) for Members has partially been addressed with the overhaul of the Members Induction Book (updated in October 2022) which also adds details regarding the "Role of Members and Support for Members". The secure area of the website also has a training page.

Some work undertaken by D&S IFCA can be complex and difficult to communicate without risk of it becoming incorrect or mis-understood by those receiving the information. It is recognised that to fully brief all Members on some issues would take a considerable amount of time. On occasions, and for a range of work, Officers have suggested that Members either highlight information available on the website and/or highlight that Officers are contactable to answer questions.

12. Build a Press Contact List.

Answer:

We do have a press contact list, but it is small. It includes contacts with Fishing News, Fishing Daily, the Guardian. Officers would welcome further contacts that may have an interest in the work of D&S IFCA.

13. Educational role – what extent, for whom, why? What adds to our overarching aims, what is nice to have?

Answer:

GWG discussions will help to make the distinction between “educating” and “informing”. Officers regularly inform, as they will answer queries or present on different subjects. Enforcement Officers can inform – “educate” fishers on current legislation, Environment Officers can inform – “educate” interested groups on environment matters and developments, whilst other Officers can inform on other core work.

If the “education role” is more in the form of public relations, this is something that has been done, but is becoming less frequent. For example, D&S IFCA has attended mixed type of events (such as Fish Stock), which attracted a diverse audience. A D&S IFCA stand manned by Officers would include educational material (Fish tank with shellfish) and questions would be asked about their biology or what is being done to protect x, y, z etc. The events could also be used to cover “drier” topics such as the development of Byelaws. Our presence at such events has diminished for various reasons, but in particular, logistics, expense, officer time and other priorities. Members may conclude that greater attendance at these types of events are more than “nice to do”; however, it does come back to what must give from areas of our Annual Planning to allow more focus on this element of communication.

Our “educational role” does not extend to explaining about or promoting health and safety or the marketing of sea fisheries products. These topics are beyond our Statutory Duties – not our remit.

14. Who can we partner with to share education effort? Aquariums, tackle shops, beach car parks. Can we collaborate with unis, SW IFCA's?

Answer:

Like the previous answer, this is a bit dependent on what is meant by “education”. We have messages to circulate and for them to be recognised – normally about what we are doing and why. For example, the closure of a public shellfish bed due to a stock issue. We have attempted in the past with some hard copy information, such as posters to be placed on

Council owned notice boards. This is more complicated than it would seem and often does involve a cost. Other outlets for information – for example tackle shops for information on angling zones – are sometimes accommodating, but not always. Hard copy printing can be expensive even in its most basic colour and presentation. In the past some information (flyers) have been professionally printed (glossy quality); however, a print run is even more expensive.

Members can discuss what level of budgetary spending should potentially be devoted to communication, including the ancillary material - printing – flyers, posters, newsletters etc. D&S IFCA can collaborate with others such as other IFCAs - if it was beneficial for all parties.

15. Payment for a part time comms role?

Answer:

D&S IFCA does not receive external support for communications - it is all internal (including Members helping with communications). D&S IFCA has a funding crisis and must use its General Reserves to support its Revenue Budget – a minimum level of General Reserves must be preserved.

Officers manage the website, social media, handle direct circulation of information, create news, create flyers etc. Although internal working limits our communication work (volume and potentially its level of quality), there are some advantages as compared to involving outsourced service providers. The big advantage is quality control of the information that forms the basis of communications, which is at risk if others less familiar with it are involved.

D&S IFCA's output for communication is based on factual content. Mixed messages can develop if information is re-arranged for "style". This was an occurring theme when D&S IFCA financed outsourced providers in the past. Quality assurance became such an issue, that time spent finalising news items and press release exceeded what Officers could do without assistance. From an Officers perspective, the professional assistance led to no noticeable increase in quality of the finalised news or output in different forms – website page displays, Facebook posts, poster designs etc.

If finances allowed assistance from outsourced providers, it would probably need to be based more around methods, different ideas, formats, planning and approaches, rather than assistance with the exact output. The same is possibly true for any assistance that could be arranged using students.

Similar issues with outsourced providers were present when it came to "one to one" communication. Unless the outsourced service provider, has enough knowledge on a particular subject, questions can't be answered or are at risk of being incorrectly answered. This can still be an issue with our own Officers attending events (that are wide ranging) – a choice must be made who to potentially send to answer questions as our work is very diverse.

16. Can fundraising and partnership deliver on some comms goals, particularly public and educational engagement?

Answer:

This will be more appropriate for discussions by the GWG and Members of the Authority. It obviously depends on clarifying the communication goals (outcome of the review) and determining prioritisation of work. Fundraising has its complications.

Additional Information: Examples of past D&S IFCA Engagement – Events



The proposed Netting Permit Byelaw “Engagement Events” were held in different locations around the District – 2017.

Locations included North Devon and the Severn areas of the District.

The events generated quite a lot of interest and Officers were able to answer a lot of questions face to face, whilst handing out copies of the proposed Byelaw (and Permits), Impact Assessment and information how to respond to the formal consultation etc.

The internal walls of the trailer showed netting areas (proposed restricted areas and estuary closing lines) along with key restrictions planned to be implemented.

Planning considerations and costs included:

Hire of the trailer, fuel, risk assessments, printing, insurance, parking fees, approximately 3 Officers at each event etc.

Other Events:

Other events in the past have included “Fish Stock” in Brixham, and others such as the Exe Estuary Festival.

Additional Information: Useful Links – Examples of Work:

- [The current D&S IFCA Communications Strategy & Delivery Plan 2018-19](#)
- [Past Authority ¼ Paper - Communications Report \(Social Sprout\) – 2018 – Statistics](#)
- [Example of a past e-newsletter “Inshore Insights” \(direct circulation\) – in its pdf format](#)
- [Example of a current news item \(blog format\) – Remote Electronic Monitoring](#)
- [Example of a past “Mail Chimp” email circular \(direct circulation\) – in its pdf format](#)

Additional Information: News Item Output 2022-23

The following are news/information items produced since 1st April 2022 (links to pdf formats to view/download). Typically, most of the news gets repeated on Facebook.

No.	Publish Date	Title	Author
1	11/05/22	Marking of Static Gear - Update	Enforcement Team
2	18/05/22	Annual Mussel Surveys Commence	S. Curtin
3	31/05/22	Recovery of Ghost Fishing Gear	J. Norman
4	07/06/22	Commercial & Recreational Sea Bass Fishing Guidance	C. Bedford
5	10/06/22	Inaccurate Electronic Charts – Potential Action Required	G. Mayhew

6	14/06/22	D&S IFCA Request Information on Fishing Activities in the Morte Platform Marine Conservation Zones	L. Parkhouse
7	08/07/22	Devon & Severn IFCA Seize Pots – Do these belong to you? (Section 265 Report – 3 month)	Enforcement Team – D. Cresswell S265 report & as contact.
8	12/07/22	Assessment Completed for the Salcombe Estuary Scallop Fishery	L. Parkhouse
9	14/07/22	Take part in an online debate for the new bass fisheries management plan	M. Mander/ J. Stewart
10	22/07/22	Commercial Scallop Divers Given a Boost by Fisheries Regulator	N. Townsend/M. Mander/ S. Clark
11	25/07/22	Devon & Severn IFCA Seize Pots – Do these belong to you? (Section 265 Report – 3 month)	N. Townsend/ 265 report completed by C. Mills.
12	31/08/22	Devon & Severn IFCA Seize Pots – Do these belong to you? (Section 265 Report – 3 month)	C. Bedford from 265 report.
13	26/09/22	Scallop Fisheries Management Plan – English and Welsh Waters	S. Clark
14	28/09/22	Bass Fisheries Management Plan	M. Mander/Policy Lab
15	13/10/22	D&S IFCA Responds to Court Case Ruling	M. Mander/Chair
16	26/10/22	IFCA Recruitment - SIFCA	N. Townsend
17	09/11/22	Seaweed Farm Installation – Bideford Bay North Devon	S. Clark
18	10/11/22	Have Your Say – D&S IFCA is looking to develop recreational sea angling opportunities at skerries bank	S. Curtin
19	21/11/22	Successful Trial of Remote Electronic Monitoring	M. Mander/N. Townsend
20	24/11/22	Formal Consultation – Proposed Mobile Fishing Permit Byelaw 2022 (starts Nov 25th)	N. Townsend
21	24/11/22	Formal Consultation – Size of Fishing Vessels Byelaw 2022 (starts Nov 25th)	N. Townsend
22	25/11/22	IFCA Recruitment – NW IFCA	N. Townsend
23	30/11/22	Defra – Webinar – Infrastructure Scheme – Recreational Sea fishing	N. Townsend
24	30/11/22	Exe Estuary Mussel Report	S. Curtin
25	05/12/22	IFCA Recruitment – NW IFCA – CEO post	N. Townsend
26	21/12/2022	PhD Opportunity: Fish Nurseries in a Changing World	J. Stewart

End.