

## D&S IFCA Funding Restructure

### Officers' Recommendation

**That Members note the content of the Officers' Report.**

### Background

The existing funding structure has resulted in D&S IFCA operating on the lowest revenue budget of all mainland IFCAs since its inception in 2010/2011 despite it having the largest District and significant commercial and recreational fisheries. In August 2024, Defra began its consideration of the funding restructure of D&S IFCA.

Defra engaged with the funding Local Authorities, and it had planned to have further meetings with the Local Authorities in December 2024 ahead of submitting options to the Minister in June or July this year. The further meetings and submission to the Minister did not occur. There were delays caused by the Local Elections and considerable changes in Councillors on the Local Authorities, but the delay was mainly caused due to Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)'s review on how local government grants are to be delivered from 2026/2027 onwards.

Defra agreed that elements of the D&S IFCA's review, such as the potential restructuring of D&S IFCA's funding or adjustments to Local Authority funding contributions, were not directly dependent on the outcome of the MHCLG review, but there were aspects that Defra believed created uncertainty which may affect the D&S IFCA's review. Defra's decision was to slow the D&S IFCA's review to understand dependencies and ensure consistency whilst ensuring adequate resourcing on wider IFCA work streams.

Defra subsequently notified all IFCAs that MHCLG's review did not apply to funding provided to IFCAs by Defra.

### Updates

The Chair has written to Defra expressing the concern in the lack of progress in the funding restructuring review that was raised by those attending D&S IFCA's Finance Working Group in November 2025. Defra confirmed that they were advising the new Ministers, following the cabinet reshuffle, on the matter.

The Chair sought clarification on whether Defra had or were intending to advise the new Ministers. Defra confirmed that D&S IFCA's submission is being held until they receive a response from the Ministers about a previous, but related submission.

Defra expect to receive a response to the related submission in the next few weeks and intend to provide the Ministers with D&S IFCA's submission in the New Year.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

### Background Papers

- Authority meeting papers and minutes 2024 and 2025