



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION

Marine Planning Decision Maker's Group (MPDMG): 11 February 2021

Includes discussions on marine renewable energy and marine license application forms.

First published: 26 February 2021

Last updated: 26 February 2021

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Attendees

Chair - Phil Coates (Welsh Government)
Rebecca Rees (Welsh Government)
Lucie Skates (NRW)
Karen Perrow (NRW)
Lindsay Christian (Newport Council)
Alan Groves (WG - Planning)
James Stewart (Devon and Severn Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority)
Paul Watts (MOD)
Laura Nokes (MOD)
Joe Smithyman (The Crown Estate)
Helen Croxson (MCGA)
Nick Salter (MCGA)
Mel Nicholls (MMO)
Judith Oakley (Swansea Council)
Nathan Slater (Vale of Glamorgan Council)
Martin Thomas (Trinity House)
Gavin Ross (O&G Authority)
Chris McMullon (Natural England)
Mark Simmonds (British Ports)
Nicola Gandy (Pembrokeshire Coast)

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Meeting

1. The Group were updated on key areas of work since the last meeting of the MPDMG in July. At the last meeting attendees asked for a document they could share with their applicants around the relevant Welsh National Marine Plan policies that would apply for low impact activities. An **infographic** relating to small applications and land planning has been produced and was shared with this group recently. Welsh Government had recently written out to Local Authorities, National Parks and Welsh Ports to provide an update on Implementation of the WNMP, with copy to relevant members of this Group. This follows the initial letter which informed that the Plan was now in place and a relevant consideration in planning decisions.
2. The Group were updated on some of the priority areas for Welsh Government which included a focus on all types of marine renewable energy as a direct result of initiatives to address climate change. Welsh Government's now legal target was for net zero emissions by 2050. This is a fast moving area with a lot of development within Welsh Government and in association with various national government departments, The Crown Estate and industry. Work of the Marine Planning team included a focus on spatially assessing opportunities, interactions between sectors, sector priorities, the evidence available and any gaps this included the EMFF **Sustainable Management of Marine Natural Resources project**, a project on Sector Locational Guidance and wider work on Strategic Resource Areas (SRAs).
3. As the Implementation Guidance had been in place for about nine months feedback was requested from the Group about its application. There was a wider discussion about use of the Marine Plan with attendees giving examples of use of the Plan and how they had incorporated it into working practices and desk notes. Some members of the Group said the WNMP had been referenced but on progressing through an application the WNMP was screened out at early stages. It was highlighted that if advice was needed around interpretation of a planning query on the WNMP it wasn't clear who to approach for this. The Marine Planning team said they were happy to answer queries at any time via the **mailbox**.

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4. NRW had been updating their Marine License application forms to specifically ask about the WNMP and further information was being added to the webpages about the Marine Plan including proportionality.
5. For any members of the group that were considering marine plans across boundaries, feedback was requested by the Marine Planning team. It would be useful to see things in other Marine Plans that Welsh Government could usefully present in a different way.
6. There was an update on the work to Monitor and Report on the effectiveness of the WNMP. Since the last meeting in July the Minister had approved the first User Survey which was open from December and closed last week. The intention was to include two more User Surveys in the future. There were 28 responses to the survey and the Group was given a review of the responses. Looking ahead work was underway to gather information for the Monitoring indicators and also continuing to develop indicators for policy / objectives relating to Historic Assets, Coastal Resilience and Tourism and Recreation.

Contact details

Queries to marineplanning@gov.wales

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