

## Marine Planning Stakeholder Reference Group (MPSRG)

29 April 2020



### Attendees

**John Hamer, Eluned Jones, Phil Coates & Rebecca Rees** (Welsh Government), **Adrian Judd & Rachel Mulholland** (Cefas), **Mark Russell** (Mineral Producers Association), **Lucie Skates, Karen Perrow & Helen Bloomfield** (NRW), **David Jones** (Blue Gem Wind/Simply Blue), **Mike Butterfield & Richard Hill** (RYA), **Abby Haines & Mel Nicholls** (MMO), **Rosie Kelly** (Crown Estate), **Katie Havard-Smith** (SEP), **Jim Evans** (WFA), **Claire Stephenson** (RSPB), **John Wrottesley** (ESCA), **Manon Kynaston** (Marine Energy Wales), **Eunice Pinn** (Seafish), **Stephen Jay** (Liverpool University)

1. The group were updated on a number of Marine Planning documents that have been produced or are in production. A number of these products are temporarily paused due to staff moving onto other high profile work areas as part of the response to Covid 19. As face to face engagement currently cannot take place, the team is developing recorded webinars to explain the marine planning process and the marine plan.
2. There are also a number of products to support plan implementation. Welsh Government commissioned a report (similar to one the MMO had produced) that looked at S.58 duties under the plan and who was taking those decisions. The report has now been received and will need to be quality assured before being released. However, this work is currently paused due to Covid 19. The Implementation Guidance is currently progressing through the final sign off stages before it can be released. A report has been commissioned to look at possible indicators to monitor the plan's effectiveness. The report was currently being considered, with the intention to convene a meeting of the indicators sub group of Marine Planning Decision Makers Group soon to discuss next steps.
3. The group were presented with an overview paper on the Spatial Approach to marine planning. The work undertaken to develop cases for proceeding for developing Strategic Resource Areas to activate WNMP safeguarding policy for specific sectors was noted. Given current circumstances, Welsh Government proposes to slow down this work and re-focus on developing Sector Locational Guidance to support sector, environmental and project planning and help de-risk consenting. The proposed focus for and shape of Sector Locational Guidance was outlined and the importance of ensuring this approach is targeted towards supporting those sectors where it could add value was emphasised.
4. A discussion on Sector Locational Guidance followed and the group were supportive of the proposal and keen to provide input as the process developed. Sector Locational Guidance would be prepared in collaboration with industries and would only be taken forward if there was support. Welsh Government were not looking to identify development areas, but instead to address challenges around evidence availability.

5. The group had an update on NRW's Marine Area Statement which was launched at the end of March 2020.
6. Future agenda items were suggested and included the Marine Area Statement, Cross border collaboration and (for a later meeting) monitoring & reporting. The next meeting will take place at the end of May.

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