

All Party Parliamentary Fishing Group



Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 19th July in Room 12.

Attendance: Sheryll Murray MP (Chairman) and Melanie Onn MP.

Also, Renee Cunningham, Assistant to Peter Aldous MP and Ben King, who is establishing a fish marketing business focussing on the inshore fisheries sector.

1. Chairman's welcome to the meeting

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Peter Aldous MP, Scott Mann MP, Cat Smith MP, Lord Tebbit and Lord Teverson.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting / matters arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were circulated and approved.

4. Discussion on the outcome of the EU Referendum and implications for the fishing industry

Melanie Onn informed the Group that she had written to the new DEFRA Secretary of State, Andrea Leadsom, seeking clarification about commitments given during the referendum campaign, particularly relating to the fishing industry. Fishing should not be used as a "sacrificial lamb" during the Brexit negotiations.

A discussion took place around the opportunities of Brexit for the fishing sector including reciprocal agreements with countries such as Iceland and Greenland and reclaiming territorial waters (200 mile limit).

Reference was made to the haddock quota and apportionment between France and the UK (currently 70% and 10% respectively). Opportunities now exist to rebalance species quotas or to do away with them altogether. It was thought that the UK would have obligations under UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea).

Consequences of Brexit for manufacturers was raised as margins remain very tight and international trade is crucial. Most of the processing in Grimsby is for the domestic market (a significant proportion of the fish comes from Norway, Denmark and Iceland), so there may be opportunities for the British fleet to catch and land more.

AP secretariat: It was agreed that the Group would conduct an inquiry into the opportunities and challenges of leaving the EU for the fishing industry. Each stakeholder in the value chain would be invited to give evidence to a Group session and a report with conclusions and recommendations would be compiled for circulation to relevant Ministers to inform the UK's Brexit negotiations. A checklist of stakeholders will be prepared and circulated for validation by Members. The first session of the inquiry will take place after the AGM.

5. Any other business (AOB)

There was no AOB.