

# MOTION ON NOTICE

City Council 16 December 2019



## DEVON AND SEVERN IFCA

Devon & Severn Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (D&S IFCA) is responsible for 4,552km<sup>2</sup> of sea, the largest sea area and the second longest coastline of all mainland IFCAs. Not including RAMSAR and SSSI, 42% of the D&S IFCA area is protected under designation, in 22 marine protected areas (10 European Marine Sites and 12 new Marine Conservation Zones). Marine protected areas have resulted in additional burdens, monitoring gear feature interactions for the IFCA environmental team to monitor, and enforcement activities.

This Council is concerned that despite these large areas of responsibility, D&S IFCA, to which Plymouth City Council is a contributing authority, has the smallest budget of nine mainland IFCAs. D&S IFCA is funded only £159 per km<sup>2</sup> of sea. This is £100 per km<sup>2</sup> less than the next lowest funded IFCA (Kent and Essex), and 75% less than the highest funded IFCA (Northumberland).

In 2010 when the IFCAs were being established, a DEFRA document entitled 'Allocating New Burden Funding to Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities and their funding local authorities' stated a need for 18.67 officers in addition to the then 7 officers to fulfil its statutory enforcement duties – a team of 25 warranted fisheries officers in total. At present D&S IFCA have only 4 enforcement officers, the lowest number of all IFCAs. Where New Burdens funding has been provided to local authorities this has not been passed on in full to D&S IFCA, being used instead to cover local authority spending as budgets are increasingly reduced due to government cuts.

Under legislation, Plymouth City Council is required to contribute 4.7% of the D&SIFCA's annual budget, the percentage having been calculated according to a national formula which takes into account the length of coastline, the number of houses and other factors. Plymouth is one of the two out of the eight local authorities who do not receive any new burdens funding to cover the costs of their contribution.

This council believes that the funding formula Government has previously devised is inadequate for D&S IFCA to fulfil its statutory duties; that it has never taken into consideration the needs of the area; that it requires updating to accommodate new conservation designations; and that it unfairly impacts on those local authorities who do not receive new burdens funding. Given the cuts of an average 60% that this Government has given to local authorities, shortfalls in IFCA funding cannot be met by Local Government at the expense of their public service provision. New Burden Funding should be extended to support all authorities with long coastlines and numerous conservation areas, in line with Government commitments in the 25 year Environment Plan to protect and restore habitats, and ensure sustainability of fisheries.

### **The City Council resolves that:**

- I. The Leader of the Council will write to the Secretary of State requesting:
  - a. A reassessment of the IFCA funding formula to take into account previous assessments of required officers; in addition to sea area, coastal length, and number of conservation designations; and to allocate Financial Administrative Penalties back to the IFCA
  - b. That New Burden Funding be provided to Councils with enforceable environmental designations including Special Area of Conservation, Special Protected Area and Marine Conservation Zone.

- c. Local government funding is restored to 2010 levels to enable Councils to deliver public services and contribute to adequate IFCA budgets.

**Proposed by: Cllr Pam Buchan**

**Signature** "By Email"

On 18 November 2019

**Seconded by: Cllr Tudor Evans**

**Signature** "By email"

On 21 November 2019