

Subject: Beaulieu DSFB Board meeting
Date: 4 June 2020
Location: Video Conference
Present: Jock Miller (JM); George Purdie (GP); Paul Pacey (PP); Frank Spencer-Nairn (FSN); Michael Spencer-Nairn (MSN); Neil Cameron (NC); Victoria Rotheroe (VC); Alastair Campbell (AC); Mary Bowman (MB)

MINUTES

ITEM	ACTION OWNER
1.0 Apologies	
1.1 Apologies were received from Nick Jackson; Simon Lovat	
2.0 Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising	
2.1 The minutes of the Board meeting held on 19 March 2020 were agreed as an accurate record.	CLERK
2.2 In respect of item 3.1 of the previous minute, JM confirmed that SSE wishes to carry on with the current structure of separate liaison meetings with Board representatives, rather than attending full Board meetings.	
3.0 Register of members' interests – Matters Arising	
3.1 The Clerk and JM made a declaration of their interests in the Lower River Beaulieu syndicate (as managing agent and committee member, respectively) in relation to item 4 on the meeting agenda.	
3.2 No other specific declarations were made by members present in respect of the agenda items.	
4.0 Fishery Board Staff Recruitment Update	
4.1 JM updated the Board on the ongoing recruitment programme. A suitable candidate who lives locally had been sourced for the biologist position. They had been interviewed by video conference, but a face-to-face interview had not yet been possible due to COVID19 lockdown restrictions. The difficulty of a new employment with social distancing was discussed and AC highlighted the worry of losing a good candidate if the appointment was not made soon. The Board agreed to plan a start date at the beginning of August. <i>Afternote – Ruth Watts has been appointed and is due to start the role on August 3rd</i>	CLERK/JM
4.2 MSN queried if the Board risks losing payment from SSE if an appointment is not made. AC reported that the board has received an effective combined payment of £40.5k from SSE in recent months, split over two fiscal years. AC noted that movement in hiring of staff will need to be shown in addition to an increase in proprietors' contributions, by Aug/Sept 2020, in order to secure a further contribution in April 2021.	

4.3 Members discussed the need for office space and a vehicle for the new biologist. It was agreed the candidate could potentially work from home and use a personal vehicle for the initial period, though PP highlighted that storage space for equipment should be provided. JM noted one option was to take over the current NBFT vehicle. JM

4.4 AC reported that a potential candidate has been identified for the Bailiff/Fisheries Officer role, though this is currently at a standstill as the individual would require to relocate which is not possible under current COVID19 restrictions. Clerk to contact the individual in due course to see if their circumstances have changed. CLERK

5.0 Enforcement and Bailiffing [CONFIDENTIAL – NOT FOR PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

CLERK

[REDACTED]

CLERK

6.0 2020 / 2021 Cashflow & 2020 Fishery Assessment

6.1 AC had tabled two scenarios, one increasing the levy and one not. He noted that if employment of new staff was to proceed and the levy was not increased the cashflow would fall dangerously low by spring 2021. It was recognised it was a difficult time to increase the levy due to financial uncertainties in relation to COVID19 but the Board agreed this was necessary to ensure delivery of the desired staff recruitment and improved fishery management without further delay.

6.2 PP suggested a staged increase in proprietor levies. AC proposed stepping up from £0.61 (2019 levy) to £0.88 for 2020, increasing to £1.08 in 2021. AC confirmed he had written to proprietors previously to indicate an increase was likely, though details had not been confirmed. The Board agreed to the revised levy of £0.88 per £1 NAV for 2020. CLERK

6.3 AC noted the budget does not consider capital spend on upgraded office accommodation etc. The Board agreed a further step up of the levy may be required at a later stage.

7.0 Report on SSE Liaison meeting 2 June 2020

7.1 JM reported that Ian McMyn has moved on within SSE. Andy Jacobs is due to take over as environmental manager and lead contact with Fishery Boards.

7.2 JM relayed that SSE have been generating at the dams at a higher than usual capacity during the night (at a cost to SSE of £60/MWh), to encourage the free passage of smolts at this time. This, in addition to brush screens installed on the gates, has been successful in largely

preventing the trapping of smolts in intake slots. Considering it has been a dry spring, there have been far fewer numbers trapped than in previous years. The increased flow has been reflected in the SEPA gauge at Erchless which has shown a spike at night.

- 7.3 The Board discussed the faults in the Mk 12 dam fish counters which SSE are currently working to fix. JM confirmed this is being held up by SSE having difficulties with their software supplier. FSN noted the counter at Beannacharan has been fixed.
- 7.4 JM confirmed that SSE have no upcoming outages planned.

8.0 Any other business

- 8.1 FSN reported that he is in the process of commissioning a study by the Rivers and Lochs Institute UHI (RLI) on the Farrar, involving DNA sampling and profiling to record the health of the fish population. FSN is waiting for approval from neighbouring proprietors to commence the study, which would likely last 3-5 years. The Board wished FSN good luck with the project.

9.0 Date of next meeting

- 9.1 It was agreed that the next Board meeting would be held on 23 September 2020 at 10am. It is hoped that this meeting will be held face to face if regulations permit.

ALL