

Subject: Beaulieu DSFB Board meeting  
Date: 19 March 2020  
Location: Telephone conference call  
Present: Jock Miller (JM); George Purdie (GP); Paul Pacey (PP); Frank Spencer-Nairn (FSN); Michael Spencer-Nairn (MSN); Neil Cameron (NC); Alastair Campbell (AC)



## MINUTES

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ITEM	ACTION OWNER
<b>1.0 Apologies</b>	
1.1 Apologies were received from Nick Jackson; Victoria Rotheroe	
<b>2.0 Minutes of Board meeting held on 5 December 2019</b>	
2.1 In respect of item 7.2 of the previous minutes, reference to River Struy should be amended to read Rivers Glass and Farrar at Struy.	CLERK
2.2 The minutes of the Board meeting held on 5 December 2019 were otherwise agreed an accurate record.	
<b>3.0 Matters arising</b>	
3.1 In respect of item 5.4 of the previous minute, JM confirmed that SSE was currently reviewing its overall policy on attending District Fishery Board meetings, although it looked likely that they were to withdraw from most Boards in favour of setting up liaison meetings as currently occurs with the Beaulieu DSFB.	
3.2 In respect of item 6.4 of the previous minute FSN asked whether Lovat Estate had been approached in respect of potential office accommodation for Board staff.	JM/CLERK
<b>4.0 Register of members' interests</b>	
4.1 The Clerk confirmed that there were still a couple of declarations of members' interests outstanding and that he was chasing these.	CLERK
4.2 No specific declarations were made by members present in respect of the agenda items.	
<b>5.0 SSE liaison meeting 16 March 2020 – report</b>	
5.1 JM confirmed that a purchase order had been received from SSE in respect of ██████ mitigation funding to be paid first quarter 2020 (SSE's financial year 2019-2020). He confirmed that SSE had also offered a further ██████ contribution in respect of their financial year 2020/2021. A purchase order for this would be raised after 1 April 2020. The net result of these contributions would be that the Board should receive a total contribution of ██████ during the Board's financial year 1 January to 31 December 2020.	

5.2 SSE will consider future funding when writing their 2021-2022 budgets in August 2020. SSE indicated that an increased contribution of [REDACTED] per annum might be available in the event that the Board implements the proposed recruitment plan that had been set out in previous correspondence. This will be confirmed later in 2020.

5.3 JM reported that SSE had now installed brush screens on the remaining gate slots at both Aigas and Kilmorack dams to try to prevent smolts becoming trapped in the gate slots. A protocol for action during the 2020 smolt run had been circulated by SSE (based upon the previous protocol for 2019). JM reported that, whilst largely acceptable, detailed comment on management of night-time waterflows was missing. SSE had indicated they would endeavour to increase waterflows during the night to aid smolt passage, but this was dependant upon operational requirements and was not guaranteed.

5.4 The Board discussed concerns over any firm commitment on the question of waterflows, together with what if any further action might be taken in this regard. FSN pointed out that the protocol was a best practice document only and that a degree of trust was required. It was agreed the matter should be kept under review and that the waterflows during the 2020 smolt run should be monitored, ideally daily. JM indicated he would try to do this.

JM

5.5 AC reported that SSE had committed to providing a monthly breakdown of the dam count figures during 2020.

5.6 [REDACTED]

## 6.0 Staff recruitment

6.1 JM updated the Board on the ongoing recruitment programme. Three candidates had been interviewed for the fishery officer / bailiff post, with a fourth application received later and a telephone interview conducted. At the time of the meeting, a suitable candidate for the biologist post was still being sought.

6.2 It was confirmed that the interview panel of JM, FSN and AC were authorised to make a decision on suitable candidates and employment offers.

## 7.0 2020 budget / levy on proprietors

7.1 AC referred to the draft budget previously circulated in December 2019. It was noted that there would be no staff costs incurred during quarter one of 2020.

7.2 JM noted that it was important that the Board's income was maintained and that it was demonstrated to SSE that the proprietors were sharing in any increased costs resulting from employment of staff. It was also noted that sufficient reserves were required to ensure the continuity of salary payments and that a capital fund would be required for purchase of equipment and potentially for office accommodation.

7.3 The Board agreed that the provisional budget levy of £1.09 per £1.00 rateable value should be applied for 2020. It was agreed that the river proprietors should be updated on current development of plans and the implications for their levy, once there was a confirmed outcome from recruitment.

CLERK

7.4 Draft accounts to 31 December 2019 – The draft audited accounts received from Saffery Champness for the year to 31 December 2019 were approved.

**CLERK**

**8.0 Any other business**

8.1 In response to a query, AC confirmed that the District Fishery Board code of practice stated that Boards “should” put in place a fishery management plan, and not “shall”. Accordingly this is a recommendation, not an absolute requirement. JM confirmed that neither the Kyle of Sutherland Board nor the Ness Board were able to assist with preparation of a revised fishery management plan for Beauly and accordingly this would need to await the appointment of a new biologist.

**9.0 Date of next meeting**

9.1 It was agreed that the next Board meeting would be held on 4 June 2020.

**ALL**