

Subject: Beaully DSFB Board meeting  
Date: 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021  
Location: Video Conference  
Present: Jock Miller (JM); Frank Spencer-Nairn (FSN); Michael Spencer-Nairn (MSN); Victoria Rotheroe (VR); Nick Jackson (NJ); Ruth Watts (RW); Jim Braithwaite (JB); Tom Waring (TW); Alastair Campbell – Clerk (AC); Claire Mackay (CM)

## MINUTES

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ITEM	ACTION OWNER
<b>1.0 Apologies</b>	
1.1 Apologies were received from George Purdie and Neil Cameron.	
<b>2.0 Minutes of Board Meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> September &amp; Matters Arising</b>	
2.1 The minutes of the Board meeting held on 23rd September 2021 were approved for publication on the Board's website.	CLERK
2.2 Matters arising from previous minutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In relation to previous minutes (Netting stations) – Netsmen, Inner Moray firth – Ruth is going to speak to Brian Shaw in the first instance once he has taken up his post at Ness DSFB in January 2022</li><li>(previous minutes 3.2) RW confirmed NEPS final income for 2021 is £15,100</li></ul>	JM
<b>3.0 Register of Interest – Agenda Items</b>	
3.1 There were no declarations made in respect of the agenda.	
<b>4.0 Review of 2021 Catches &amp; Dam Counts</b>	
4.1 AC confirmed a few proprietors catch returns were still awaited and being chased. The likely total salmon catch for the year was estimated at between 600 and 650.	
4.2 RW reported on recent fish pass counter information from SSE. Figures counted were: Kilmorack 3,075; Aigas 2,896; Beannachran 123. Mark 12 counters are believed to undercount by around 25%, so true figures are likely to be higher.	
4.3 The counts were slightly below the 10-year average. Fish moved earlier at Kilmorack than in 2020. Kelts were reported coming down as late as May or June.	
4.4 AC enquired if there was any further update on the recent failure of the pass at Kilmorack. RW had spoken to SSE, who reported that it is to be fixed in January. It was noted that a refurbishment is planned in 2022, but this has not been raised at the recent liaison meeting with SSE.	

## **5.0 Financial Report Year to Date / 2022 Budget & Fishery Assessment**

- 5.1 A copy of the income and expenditure report to 31/10/21 had been circulated with the meeting papers. TW enquired about vehicle expenses, which are slightly above budget. AC to confirm. There has been an increase in insurance, largely attributable to the Board taking on employees. It was suggested alternative quotes be sought in 2022. **CLERK**
- 5.2 A draft budget for 2022 had been circulated with the meeting papers. As drafted, this showed a 8% increase in proprietor levy. Specific identified increases in cost were: - staff salary reviews; insurance costs; potential office rent. The contribution from SSE was to rise in line with RPI.
- 5.3 TW noted that the levy had effectively doubled in a few years and proposed keeping the levy unchanged. He remarked that the Board need to demonstrate the value of the increased costs in recent years and that the message to proprietors needed careful thought. TW commented that a freeze in levy, achieved if necessary, through dipping into reserves, would give the Board 12 months to gain the broad buy-in of proprietors and stakeholders. The Board did not agree or disagree, and the levy freeze suggestion remained undecided. JB noted that the increase in costs, coupled with a decline in catches, was a difficult situation for BAC members to understand.
- 5.4 It was noted that there would need to be further discussion regarding professional costs, the level of levy for 2022 and office accommodation. The Board agreed that if any increase in levy over 2021 is approved such increase will need to be clearly explained at the time of the first levy invoice.

## **6.0 Senior Biologist's Report**

- 6.1 A written report had been circulated with the meeting papers.
- 6.2 RW confirmed the Health & Safety policy review was nearly complete. A chemical store and appropriate documentation were now in place.
- 6.3 RW & AS had recently been working with the Lower Beaully ghillies to clear blockages on the Bruiach burn.
- 6.4 AS had also been engaged in clearing Japanese Knotweed recently. The work to clear Himalayan Balsam in the summer was now featured as a case study on the SISI website.

## **7.0 Bailiff Report**

- 7.1 A written report had been circulated with the meeting papers.
- 7.2 AS was unable to attend. RW reported that AS remained very keen for all anglers to carry written permits. The practicalities of this were discussed. RW requested if LBFS angler names could be passed to AS (probably via G Armstrong). TW to discuss and revert. FSN happy to email Farrar fishing rota each week. **TW**
- 7.3 It was confirmed that the bailiff annual report can be circulated to all proprietors. RW to arrange. RW to check first with AS if anything should be redacted from report, including proprietor names. **RW**

- 7.4 Concerns about poaching on the Middle Beaully were discussed. It was agreed this area needed specific focus. AS to engage with D Fraser and discuss security of boats on this section. **AS**
- 8.0 2022 Conservation Policy & Salmon Conservation Regulations**
- 8.1 The 2021 Conservation Policy was reviewed for 2022. RW requested a clause be inserted recommending fishing cease above water temperature of 18°C. It was questioned how this could be implemented catchment wide, as the temperature could vary considerably throughout the catchment. RW confirmed that temperature information was available from SSE dams and SEPA gauging stations. She also has a mobile hand probe.
- 8.2 It was agreed that for a clause to be inserted, it needed to be confirmed how this could be implemented. RW to consider further. AC noted the Conservation Policy needed to be published and sent out to proprietors in early spring. **RW**
- 9.0 Office Accommodation Update**
- 9.1 JM reported that, following enquiries, no alternative suitable accommodation had been identified and therefore contractor prices needed to be revisited and a decision be made about Corff.
- 9.2 TW indicated a longer lease at Corff was unlikely, but occupancy free of charge for no more than a year might be an option.
- 9.3 JM to revisit contractor quotes in January for minimal work at Corff. JB offered to assist. FSN & VR to forward contractor contacts. **JM/JB/FSN/VR**
- 10.0 AOB**
- 10.1 SSE Liaison Meeting Minutes 11/11/21 were noted.
- 10.2 RW had been speaking with Andrew Steel, SEPA, with regards the broken fish pass at Kilmorack.
- 10.3 JM confirmed that, along with himself and RW, the current SSE Liaison representatives were FSN; MSN and TW. Should any Board member wish to attend SSE liaison meetings, they should contact him.
- 10.4 JB reported that Ian Morrison was the new Chair of BAC.
- 10.5 Board members discussed proposed options for professional fees after the meeting in a private session and an update will be given at the next meeting prior to decision on the levy.
- 11.0 Date of next meeting**
- 11.1 30<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at 10.00am. **ALL**