

Cromarty Fisheries



Cromarty Firth Fishery Board
Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting at CKD
Galbraith offices, Inverness
Tuesday 24th April 2012

Present	
Mr A Matheson – Convener	AM
Mr I Duncan – Vice Convener	ID
Mr S McKelvey – Director	SM
Dr A Stephen – SSE Biologist	AS
Lord Nickson	LN
Mr I Rathbone – (part only)	IR
Mr R Whitson – Clerk	RW

1.	Apologies	Action
	None.	
2.	Minutes of Meeting – 4th October 2011	
	The minutes were approved.	
3.	Matters Arising	
	It was decided that the matters arising would be covered during the course of the agenda.	
4.	Catch Returns	
	RW was asked to comment on catch returns for the past season. He informed the Board that in line with his previous experiences collating catch returns was a	

	<p>Provisional figures for year end 2011/2012 indicate that the Board has worked pretty well to the budget.</p> <p>IR explained that the Clydesdale account is currently set up in such a way that the authorised signatories are partners of CKD Galbraith. Under new regulations this should technically be a client account, however to ease administration, it was agreed that SM should be added onto the bank mandate thus removing the account from realms of a client account. The Board agreed this.</p> <p>It was further noted that given the dates of the financial year for the Board, it would be better to hold Management Committee and Board meetings towards the end of May; this would allow final figures for the year to be published and to give a more thorough overview of the Boards financial affairs. This was generally agreed as being a good idea.</p> <p>It was further agreed that the accounts will be run monthly as opposed to quarterly thus giving a more accurate overview of income and expenditure.</p> <p>IR left the meeting.</p>	<p>IR/SM</p> <p>RW/IR</p> <p>Action</p> <p>IR</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Dingwall Angling Club - Lease and the future of the lower Conon fishings</p>	
	<p>The Committee discussed the future of Dingwall Angling Club, specifically with regards to the Lower Conon Water, over which they had enjoyed occupancy for a number of years.</p> <p>Prior to receiving a copy of Highland Council's ownership schedule, the Board were under the impression that Anchor pool was in Board ownership. It transpires, it is in fact the property of Highland Council. The principal value relating to the Lower Conon Fisheries relates to that pool, thus rendering the Board's fishing's less attractive and valuable due to access and other issues.</p> <p>There was a conversation regarding the formation of a</p>	

	<p>new Sea Trout Angling Club to fish the Lower Conon fishings.</p> <p>In the event that a new Sea Trout Club were to be established, an emphasis on training, developing young fishers and perhaps tying in with the Moray Firth Sea Trout Project might be appealing to the Board and Trust and Trust funds could possibly be made available to assist them in setting up.</p> <p>DN suggested forming a task force to take this forward, comprising AS,SM,RW and Marcus Walters of the Moray Firth Sea Trout project.</p> <p>The provision of this new club would possibly be timely as, from discussions with Dingwall Angling Club it is unclear as to how long it can survive in its current form and how long it will remain financially viable in order to cover the assessments and rent for the Upper Conon beat in the ownership of the Highland Council.</p> <p>AM to contact the Chairman of Dingwall Angling Club to see if we could meet in timely manner to review if they wish to re-instate their use of the Lower Conon Water by entering into a new lease, on the basis of the rent previously proposed.</p> <p>Subsequent events – note that a lease was agreed, has been entered into and the initial rent received.</p>	<p>Action</p> <p>AS/SM/RW</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Policy and Tagging Update</p>	
	<p>SM briefed the Committee that the trial tagging policy is now in place.</p> <p>Clubs have been issued with their tags and record sheets as have a number of private beats. He briefly explained the process for time share members and the provision of their tags and also briefed the Committee regarding the annually changing colours and individual numbers of the tags and the inability of an angler to carry a tag from season to season without it clearly being an illegally</p>	

	<p>caught fish.</p> <p>This policy remains experimental however we are encouraged by the general attitude of angling clubs and others.</p> <p>AM observed that the Conservation Policy had not been clearly represented in the last proprietors meeting and he would clarify the position at the Board meeting on the 27th March.</p> <p>RW to take spare copies of the Conservation Policy to the meeting.</p>	<p>RW</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Board Ownership and Assets Update</p>	
	<p>Balintore Bothy was discussed and the lack of clarity from the title plan as to who actually owns parts of the Bothy which appear on the title plan.</p> <p>ID suggested that we register the title under the new Land Registry rules which should identify any issues regarding ownership of the Bothy and the small additional buildings that seem to have been erected over time. The Committee agreed this to be a sensible and practical means of identifying any ownership discrepancies.</p> <p>Some questions regarding Allt Graad ownership remain unanswered principally due to lack of response by Highland Deephaven. This will be pursued through Ronald Munro Ferguson who is a member of the Deep Haven Board.</p> <p>There are gaps in the Board's knowledge as to ownership at Balnagown River; there is no real progress, not aided by the departure of the latest Balnagown Factor, Nick Mellish.</p> <p>Alness River – SM has discussed this with Ronald Munro Ferguson and is in possession of a good accurate map highlighting ownership.</p>	<p>RW</p> <p>Action</p> <p>SM</p>

	<p>We are not aware of any gaps of ownership on Evanton River.</p> <p>Purchasing of disused netting stations was then discussed. The Committee is aware that disused netting stations are coming to the market and are exchanging hands for considerable sums of money. This is clearly of concern as there is potential to do severe damage to wild salmon stocks.</p> <p>It was proposed that the Board should endeavour to purchase any netting stations that become available within the Board area where we can. It was further agreed that we need to speak to ASFB regarding any funds they may have to assist in this process.</p> <p>It was agreed generally that a full assessment of the Board's netting stations should be carried out and followed up where appropriate.</p> <p>ID displayed a document dating from 2010 that should have gone out with (2012?) assessment noting the Board's interest to any lower proprietors who may be contemplating giving up their fishings and it was agreed that this would be revamped and Board accompany assessments for 2011 when sent out during April.</p>	<p>RW/IR</p> <p>RW</p> <p>RW</p>
9.	ASFB recommended website	
	<p>The Board has agreed to take a page on the ASFB website. SM would publish a monthly report and meeting minutes would accompany as appropriate.</p>	SM
10.	Aquacultural and Fisheries Bill Update	
	<p>SM described the contents of the Boards response to the consultation and discussion ensued about responses from other boards and whether others were acting in the interest of the collective by supporting the general tone set by ASFB.</p>	
11.	Trust	
	<p>DN briefly discussed the Trust's assets which at December sat at £271,000.</p>	

	<p>SM discussed some of the further monies that were due in totaling approximately £40,000. The Trust therefore next year would have in the region of £75,000 - £80,000 to distribute to projects that meet the relevant criteria.</p> <p>It had been mooted that more money should be distributed or possibly reinvested on a short terms basis, however with a Board deficit coming up and the eligibility of certain projects. DN had determined that it would be perhaps better to keep the cash at hand.</p> <p>At this point the subject of assessments was also discussed.</p> <p>Assessments have not been changed for six years, and whilst some preparatory work may be prudent in the event that we feel we have to raise assessment, it was hoped that with the strong position that the Trust finds itself in that further payments for eligible projects will negate the need to raise the assessment for the foreseeable future.</p>	Action
12.	Directors Pension Arrangements	
	This discussion was deferred for a later date.	
13.	New Board Logo	
	There was some discussion on the new Board logo and it was agreed to take it to the Board meeting on the 27 th April.	
14.	Directors Report	
	During the course of the meeting on 27 th April, SM would not be covering the contents of his report in great detail however would be covering the river fly project and anglers log book in the form of a presentation to proprietors.	SM
15.	AOCB	
	<p>The after season experiment was discussed and it was agreed that this should become an agenda point for the meeting on the 27th April.</p> <p>A Ghillies meeting was also planned for 27th April at some stage in the late afternoon.</p>	

16.	Date of next meeting	
	A decision on date of next meeting was deferred until after the Board meeting on the 27 th April.	