

MINUTES of MEETING of THE RIVER DEVERON DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD
being a Meeting open to the public in terms of the Aquaculture & Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013
Thursday 5th September 2024 at 3.30pm held at The Banff Springs Hotel, Banff.
This meeting was held in conjunction with that of the TRUSTEES of THE DEVERON, BOGIE & ISLA RIVERS
CHARITABLE TRUST. The minutes cover both organisations.

At the outset, the Chairman explained that in terms of the 2013 Act, all Meetings require to be open to the public. An invitation to the public was published on the Board's website along with a copy of the proposed Agenda. Any member who wished to attend was required to inform the Clerk.

Present: **Andrew Allwood (B), Jim Cruickshank (B&T), J Player (B), Rory Cooper (B & T), Frank Henderson (B & T)** (Turriff Angling Association & Turriff Community), **Andrew Higgins (B), Robert Shields (B & T), Gordon Morison (B), Richard Breakell (B)** (Salmon Anglers). **Richie Miller** (B and representative of DBI Trust).

In attendance- **S Roebuck** (Clerk to Board and Administrator of DBI Trust);
Marcus Walters (DBI Trust).

{B = Board member; T = Trustee or representative}

Chairman: **Mr Andrew Allwood**

Apologies for Absence: **Bob Copland (B), David Borthwick (B & T), Matthew Marsden (B)**

Minutes of Meeting on 27th June 2024 A draft of the Minutes of the Meeting had been sent to all Members of the Board and Trust and was unanimously approved by those who had attended. The minutes have been published on the Board/Trust's website (www.deveron.org) and signed off by the Chairman of the Meeting.

Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013 Mr Allwood reported that there were no changes noted to Board Members Financial Interests since 27th June 2024 as applicable to the Board. No complaints against the Board had been received by the Clerk since the last meeting.

Update on Financial Matters - RDDSF Mrs Roebuck reported that bank balances in both organisations were healthy. The next quarterly accounts will be made up to 30th September and circulated in October.
Mrs Roebuck reported that statements have been sent out for the twenty-one outstanding assessments.

Discussion of Forthcoming AGM There will be a presentation by Mr Walters, giving a brief overview of the counter and other projects which they have been working on. Also giving a presentation is Mr Jamie Gordon (AST) with an update on the habitat restoration plans through project Deveron and AST.

Mr Allwood suggested for a link to the Annual Report to be on the homepage of the DBI Website.

Mr Morison explained that it was agreed that there were some trees to go down to the King Edward Burn but there has been no progress. It was originally planned to get the trees this year, but it has now been moved to next spring. Mr Jamie Gordon explained that they are waiting for an update, hopefully by the end of September with confirmation for additional funds.

AOCB – Poaching

Mr Allwood asked for an update on poaching and if more time needs to be spent on effort and resources on controlling and preventing further poaching. Mr Miller agreed there has been an upturn in poaching. There was a poaching group recently but feels measures currently in place are enough until the end of this season. Mr Miller added they could think about a wider approach next year.

Mr Allwood suggested a checklist be made and circulated so if anyone sees a poaching incident, they know exactly what to do or where report it, even if they do not personally get involved. The checklist may include who to report or the number to ring.

AOCB – Opening Day

Mr Shields suggested using a drone at the event to capture the public walking down to the river. Mr Miller explained it is not possible to fly the drone directly overhead but can do it 50m to the side or from the opposite bank.

AOCB – Banff Bridge

Mr Miller explained the Trust on behalf of the Board have submitted their thoughts on the current design, expressed to Aberdeenshire Council that it is their obligation to show us they have taken fish passage into account and what they are going to do to ensure that. Furthermore, we took independent advice from Trex Ecology and the council employed an environmental consultancy to do a review of the bridge and the design to make sure it met fish passage in all tidal conditions, but they are yet to finalise the final design.

Mr Allwood expressed it is not just tides, it is drought conditions as well that need to be considered. Mr Miller explained the two arches in the middle are the most important, they always have got sufficient flow in them, the space at the bottom of the bridge is adequate.

AOCB – Social Media

Mr Morison asked if it was possible to put out something in terms of best practice about how to handle and weigh fish that are caught . And to ask anglers not to put anything on Social media that does not follow best practice. Mr Miller explained that the Trust does not put any pictures up unless it meets their best practice and he will shortly be making a video with FMS to highlight best practice. Mr Allwood suggested making a better note or info pack for the proprietors on the river for the next season.

The meeting then focused on Trust Business

Update on Financial Matters – DBI Trust

Mr Cruickshank explained that the Trust is working within the budget, it is still running a deficit, but this is projected to reduce by about a third and it is work in progress. There are no concerns. The main costs that were budgeted have been stuck to and have not been changed.

Valuation of Improvement fund as of 03 September 2024: £169.337.75

Report by Mr Miller and Mr Walters on DBI Trust work

Mr Miller and Mr Walters prepared a written report on the work of the Trust since the last Board Meeting. They gave a short report as most of the points were included in the Annual Report which had now been circulated to all Proprietors and other interested parties. Report available on request.

General Discussions were had on the topics below:

- Communications
- SISI
- Fishery Protection
- Water Quality
- Bird Counts and Licence
- Health and Safety
- Windfarms
- Seal Licence – River Deveron
- Glenkeith Weir Fish Passage
- Electrofishing
- Project Deveron – Phase 1
- Project Deveron – Phase 2
- Mrs “Tiny” Morison’s Deveron Salmon – Centenary Celebrations
- The river Within – Chivas & Rivers Trust Partnership
- Annual Report and Accounts 2023/24
- Proposed River Grading 2024 – River Deveron Cat.2

Health and Safety

The Store at Avochie Estate has been renovated to a high standard which makes things easier to find and see.

Next meeting

Next Board/Trust meeting will be on Wednesday 4th December at Avochie House.

Meeting closed at 4:50pm

Mr Allwood thanked everyone for attending. The Annual Proprietors Meeting and DBIT AGM followed.