

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
held at CASTLE HOTEL, HUNTLY on Thursday 7th July 2016 at 12 noon.
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.

Calvert McKibbin attended as a member of the public.

Present: Malcolm Hay (B & T), Robert Shields (B & T), Rory Cooper (B & T), Mrs J Player (B), A Gordon Morison (B), (Upper Proprietors), Donald Galloway (B) (Banff & Macduff Angling Association - Lower), Frank Henderson (B & T) (Turriff Angling Association & Turriff Community), Jim Cruickshank (T). In attendance- Mrs S D Paxton (Clerk and Administrator of DBI Trust);
{ B = Board member; T = Trustee or representative}

Chairman: Malcolm Hay

Apologies for Absence: C Richard Marsden (B), David Borthwick (B & T), Richard Breakell (B), Roger Polson (T), Richie Miller (B and representative of DBI Trust), Neil Stephen (Ghillies Rep – DBI Trust)

Minutes of Meetings on 7th April 2016 A draft of the Minutes of the Meetings had been sent to all Members of the Board and Trust and unanimously approved by those who had attended. The minutes have been published on the Board/Trusts's website (www.deveron.org) and signed by the Chairman of the Meeting. There were no queries nor matters outstanding.

Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013 Mr Hay reported that there were no changes noted to Members Financial Interests since 7th April 2016 as applicable to the Board. No complaints against the Board had been received by the Clerk since the last meeting.

Report by Mr Miller on DBI Trust work Mr Miller, Director and Senior Biologist of the Trust, had prepared a written report on the work of the Trust since the last Board Meeting and this was handed out (available on request). Mr Miller was unable to attend the meeting and in his absence, Mr Hay summarised the main items in the report. The Smolt Tracking Project was now nearing completion and the results being analysed. Thanks were given to all Parties who had assisted in various ways with the Project. All Board members were in approval that the balance of funding (£7,667.50) required could now be transferred over to the Trust from the Improvement Fund – Mrs Paxton to attend to.

Update on Financial Matters Mr Hay reported that draft Annual Accounts for Board and Trust had been circulated to all concerned for approval. No queries were raised; all Members and Trustees were in agreement that the accounts be approved and finalised. The Improvement Fund is currently standing at £131,000. A discussion was held about the Fund and further discussion will take place at the AGM in September with proprietors present. The fund is, covered by OSCR and can only be used for the improvement of the River. Mr Cruickshank asked if the Trust's future was secure. Mr Hay replied saying that it was the responsibility of the Trustees to ensure the future of the organisation. There was a suggestion from Mr Shields to acquire fish counters, but Mr Hay added that as the Government intends to have them sited in main rivers, such a decision should be postponed

until the outcome of the WFR process is known. Counters could still be located in tributaries.

Budget & Determine Assessment Rate

The budget for the Board for 2016/17 was distributed. There was a discussion on the figures and the rate for the levy for the forthcoming year. A small deficit is predicted but Mrs Paxton pointed out that with a change in staffing at the end of October (Mr Minty's retiral and new employee joining the Trust who will assist the Board) there was still an element of uncertainty over some expenditure. Mr Hay suggested that the levy rate be left at 49p in the £. All Board Members agreed to leaving the rate at 49p. Mrs Paxton was asked to send out levy notices to Proprietors.

Mr Cruickshank asked about rerating/revaluations. Mr Hay pointed out that this will happen in 2017. Mrs Paxton has been advised that rates may not be fully determined by June 2017 and assessments may be issued in an interim form and then amended if required

Wild Fisheries Review:

Mr Hay brought members up to date on the current situation. A document received from Alasdair Laing (ASFB) and Andrew Wallace (RAFTS) was circulated. This sets out the suggestion of a South Moray Firth FMO which would cover the Spey, Deveron, Lossie, Findhorn, Nairn DSFBs.

Mr Hay had had a conversation with Mr Laing to discuss the rationale behind the FMOs. Mr Laing said: all rivers were encouraged to form a group; less FMOs mean ability to spread senior management costs; Trusts are outside the FMO; proprietors will represent up to 49% of the FMO's board; current levy raises half of what government wants so funding gap will be covered by rod licence and money from other sources (not proprietors); involvement on FMO by SNH, SEPA, Council etc will be paid jobs. Mr Morison was concerned about the cost of the rod licence – what happens if fishing continues to decline, will the rate steadily increase. Mr Hay believed that this had not been discussed.

Mr Hay reported that various members had attended a meeting with the Government/ASFB recently and no indication was given to them of the circular referred to above. Figures had been prepared to show the Deveron forming its own FMO, with the Ugie (Ythan are linking with the Dee), but there will be a deficit. Suggestion of a discussion with Proprietors through an Extraordinary Meeting but it was felt that discussion should be left with the Board meantime. Mr Hay said that legislation will be starting in September to abolish Boards and enforce FMOs but timescale after that is unknown.

A reply has to be made to the questions raised in the above document and after discussing these, Mr Hay was asked to draft a reply and circulate it for comment.

It was agreed that an article should be put in the next Deveron Flyer to bring recipients up to date on current views on WFR and FMO and how it effects the Deveron. This should be done as soon as possible. Mr Miller to liaise with Mr Hay.

AOCB – Resignation from Trust

Mrs Paxton intimated that she had received a letter of apology for the meeting from Roger Polson. In it he tendered his resignation as he felt that with business commitments he was unable to fulfil his duties. His resignation was accepted and Mrs Paxton was asked to write a letter of thanks and to notify Companies House.

AOCB – Diseased Fish

Mrs Paxton was asked by Mr Miller to raise a matter – some fish had been caught at Marnoch Lodge and Montcoffer showing some signs of disease. No

cause for concern, but requested that photos be taken and sent to him if possible.

AOCB – Next meeting: Next meeting will be the AGM on Thurs 15th Sept. The Board/Trust meeting will be at the later time of 3pm (to be confirmed).

Meeting closed at 2pm Mr Hay thanked everyone for attending.