

MINUTES of THE 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 The Banff Springs Hotel, Banff on Thursday 27th June 2024 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 are required 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 of the public who wished to attend was required to inform the Clerk.

Present: **Andrew Allwood (B & T), Jim Cruickshank (B & T), Matthew Marsden (B), Rory Cooper (B & T), Andrew Higgins (B), Frank Henderson (B & T) (Turriff Angling Association & Turriff Community), A Gordon Morison (B)**

In attendance- **Marcus Walters** (DBI Trust), **Richie Miller** (B and representative of DBI Trust), **Sarah Roebuck** (Clerk/Administrator).
Sarah Cruickshank attended as a member of the Public.

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

Chairman: Andrew Allwood

Apologies for Absence: Richard Breakell (B), Robert Shields (B&T), Jacky Player (B), Bob Copland (B), David Borthwick (B)

Minutes of Meetings on 28th March 2024 A draft of the Minutes of the Meeting had been sent to all Member's of the Board and Trust and unanimously approved by those who had attended. The minutes have been published on the Board/Trust's website (www.deveron.org) and signed 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 28th March as applicable to the Board. No complaints against the Board had been received by the Clerk since the last meeting.

Update on Financial Matters – Board Mrs Roebuck informed the Board that she'd received the draft statutory accounts for the Board for the year ended 31 March 2024. These will be looked at by the Chairman and circulated for approval.

One Assessment remains outstanding.

Valuation for the improvement fund as at 25 June 2024 : £166,564.15

Budget & Fix Assessment A draft budget was circulated to the board prior to the Board Meeting. There was a general discussion on the levy rate in view of the budget figures. As a result, the board unanimously approved a rate of 69p in the £. This will result in a deliberate bank account decline over the next period, but this has been planned into the cash flow projections. Mr Allwood suggested reviewing cashflow next year by looking at inflation rates and how that impacts figures going forward. Any beat valuation changes through appeal to be taken into consideration too when reviewing cashflow.

AOCB - Poaching

Mr Miller does not think poaching is on the rise, despite two incidents recently. Cameras are up and providing a useful service and it is saving time and effort on the road.

Mr Allwood suggested deploying a camera or two on an ad hoc basis to see if anything is getting missed.

Update on Financial Matters – Trust

Mrs Roebuck informed the Board that she'd received the draft statutory accounts for the Trust for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Mr Cruickshank reported a profit for the year end accounts of £4250.

Mr Cruickshank expressed how important the budget exercise is and explained its very worthwhile. The budget shows accurate since it was updated through the season. Mr Cruickshank felt pleased and was thankful to the team for sticking to that budget.

Mr Cruickshank also expressed the trust is presented with the same dilemma this year with more unknown extra income to rectify the projected deficit.

Mr Miller explained projected figures on the draft budget.

Report by Mr Miller and Mr Walters on DBI Trust work

Mr Miller and Mr Walters had prepared a written report on the work of the Trust since the last Board Meeting, and this was handed out (available on request).

General Discussions were had on the topics below:

- Communications
- Scottish Invasive Species Initiative (SISI)
- Fishery Protection
- Water Quality
- Bird Count and Licence
- Health and Safety
- Windfarms
- Seal Licence – River Deveron
- Glenkeith Weir Fish Passage
- Project Deveron – Phase 1
- Project Deveron – Phase 2
- Mr "Tiny" Morison's Deveron Salmon – Centenary Celebrations
- The River Within – Chivas & Rivers Trust Partnership
- Annual Report and Accounts 2023/24

Bird Count and License: Mr Walters expressed it is getting more complex collecting the data each month. It is manageable but to streamline it, Mr Walters has spoken to SFCC about producing an app where everyone can enter their bird count numbers into and that would automatically go to one place and one format. All members in favour of this.

Mr Walters explained the app would be for the official counters. If others were to use it, a tick box option to say "this is not part of the official count" could be included. It needs to be clear for reporting that ad hoc sitings are separate from the official counts.

Mr Allwood asked for some changes to be made to the bird count graphs on the report. Mr Walters to amend graphs to show data starting from Aug/Sept so it shows the peak cycle in the middle.

Glenkeith Weir Fish Passage: Mr Higgins explained in Norway the government has shut half its rivers which could go on for a long time. Mr Higgins questioned if there is any risk the Scottish government will follow suit.

Mr Miller explained he does not think this will happen in the short term because Scotland have a grading system for the rivers. If a river is graded a 3 it means it is legally a 100% catch and release.

Project Deveron: Mr Walters explained in more detail phase 1 and phase 2.

The Board thanked Mr. Walters for all his dedication in compiling the data for the fish counter project.

Mr Allwood questioned Mr Walters about the time and effort it takes to gather all information and data. Mr Walters explained he is encouraged by the way the Scottish Government are looking at it and the seriousness of it. Mr Walters feels he's getting better and more efficient at doing it and managing his time better. Certain times of year can be challenging depending on workload especially if the electrofishing surveys are taking place leading to a bigger backlog.

Mr Cruickshank asked Mr Walters if water temperature and volume are both being recorded. Mr Walters explained Muireisk is a good gauge for height, and he's worked out how to get tide data from Banff as well. Temperature monitoring is a task still to be addressed.

Health and Safety

Nothing further to report.

AOCB – Jack Daniels

Mr Morison suggested looking into Jack Daniels for additional income. Mr Miller kindly volunteered to speak to the manager.

AOCB – Next meeting:

The next Board/Trust meeting will be held on Thursday 5th September 2024 at 3.30pm at the Banff Springs Hotel, Banff, followed by the Annual Proprietors Meeting and joint Board and Trust AGM at 5pm.

Meeting closed at 2.10pm

Mr. Cruickshank formally closed the meeting for the Trust.
The Board meeting is also closed.
Mr Allwood thanked everyone for attending.