

**MINUTES of the MEETING of THE RIVER DEVERON DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD,
a Meeting open to the public within the terms of the Aquaculture & Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013 on
Wednesday 29th March 2023 at 12 noon 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. These 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 and all social media accounts along with a copy of the proposed Agenda. Any member who wished to attend was required to inform the Clerk.

Members of the Public Present: Carl Malpass

Present: Jim Cruickshank (B&T), Andrew Allwood (B&T), Robert Copland (B), Gordon Morison (B), Rory Cooper (B & T), Richard Breakell (B)

In attendance-

Richie Miller (B and representative of DBI Trust), **Sarah Roebuck** (Clerk to the Board and Administrator of DBI Trust); **Karen Muller** (SISI Project Officer)

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

Chairman: Mr Andrew Allwood

Apologies for Absence & Welcome Andrew Higgins (B), Matthew Marsden (B), Robert Shields (B & T), Mrs J Player (B), Frank Henderson (B&T) (Turriff Angling Association & Turriff Community), David Borthwick (B & T)

Marcus Walters (DBI Trust)

Minutes of Meeting on 7th Dec 2022 A draft of the Minutes of the Meeting 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/Trust'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 Allwood reported that there were no changes noted to Board Members financial interests since 7th December 2022 meeting as applicable to the Board. No complaints against the Board had been received by the Clerk since the last meeting.

Fishery Protection Bailiff Update There has been no illegal activity. Unfortunately, the two volunteers that were trained that did help last year have moved on. Mr Miller hopes to identify two new volunteer bailiffs and get them trained in June. Signage has been commissioned for down at the association and at the wrack, this is so there is no misunderstanding of where beats are and more importantly for anglers to know where to get tickets from.

Mr Morison suggested the use of remote cameras to use as an additional aid. This has been previously investigated by Mr Miller and he's explained, it's not classed as entrapment if signs are put up. Mr Allwood suggested the board funds the purchase of the cameras.

Update on Financial Matters – Board

Mrs. Roebuck reported the last quarterly accounts to 31st December had been circulated and the ones for March will be issued in May.
The Board was informed that there were two beat assessments outstanding. Both beats have had ample reminders via post/ e-mail and phone calls.
Mr Allwood to chase.

AOCB–2023 Assessments

Mrs Roebuck to e-mail assessor and request for 2023 valuations.

Mr Allwood urged that discussions should be had before the July meeting. Mr Morison expressed that the principle would need to be agreed before the July meeting where the rate is then discussed.

AOCB – Karen Muller

Miss Muller has explained that she is moving to the Spey as project officer for SiSi and 2 new project officers will start on the Deveron. New starts won't be in position until end of April/ beginning of May, when the hand over will start.

Mr Allwood thanked Miss Muller for all her hard work on the Deveron over the years.

The meeting then focussed on Trust Business.

Update on Financial Matters – Trust

Mr Cruickshank explained that we started the year off on a budget predicting a deficit of £6k but there was a lot of uncertainty with certain figures. Mr Cruickshank explained that the Trust will likely breakeven or have a small surplus at the end of the year. Financially the Trust is in a healthy position. Furthermore, there is a lot of projects new and ongoing this year, which makes it difficult to detect an accurate budget which will mean we need a healthy reserve just in case.

Mrs Roebuck reported that the Trust budget will be drawn up for the July meeting.

The valuation of the Trust investment held by McInroy and Wood was £153,334.71.

Report by Mr Miller & Mr Walters on DBI Trust work

Mr Miller, Director of the Trust, and Mr Walters, River Operations Manager, had prepared a written report on the work of the Trust since the last Board Meeting and this was e-mailed to all members (**Detailed report available on request from the Clerk**).

Topics discussed included:

- Communications
- Scottish Invasive Species Initiative (SISI) – Two new project officers will start. Rachel Turner and Mirella Toth.
- Fishery Protection
- Water Quality
- Bird Counts
- Health and Safety
- Lower Tributaries Project – King Edward
- Windfarms
- Moray Firth Seal Licence
- Glenkeith Weir Fish Passage
- Project Deveron – Atlantic Salmon Trust & Scot Gov. Collaboration

- Project Deveron – Phase 2 Catchment Restoration
- Pink Salmon - 2023
- River Opening – 2023
- River Deveron Gin
- Wild Salmon Strategy: Implementation Plan 2023 – 2028
- River Trainee Scheme

Health and Safety

The spot tracker devices we used in areas with no mobile reception, began to fail and had a poor reliable service so the Trust now uses fast find 220 PLB.

AOCB – Deveron Gin

There was general discussion for a future batch of Gin to incorporate the 100-year anniversary of the heaviest UK fly-caught salmon on the Deveron by Mrs Clementina 'Tiny' Morison.

AOCB – Angler’s Map

Mr Miller explained that the Trust has the digital copy, and the map can be updated.

Mr Miller to contact Bowlts to update.

AOCB – Rewilding

Mr Breakell expressed his concern about the ever increasing and expanding population of beaver in Scotland and that we should investigate the pros and cons of beavers for the Deveron catchment and fishery as soon as possible. Mr Breakell expressed that there has been planting of trees to cool the water, demolishing dams to allow fish migrations and beavers could counteract all this work. Mr Miller highlighted that NatureScot has previously outlined in one of their reports that the Deveron catchment would not be a suitable candidate for beaver reintroduction due to a number of reasons, including habitat and conflict with current landuse.

AOCB – Karen Muller

Mr Cruickshank expressed that Karen has been a fantastic success and contributed so much not only in her SISI role but in other aspects , communications in particular. She has helped so much as part of the team and gone beyond her line of duty over the years and will be missed. Mr Cruickshank wished her well in her new job and thanked her for all her contributions.

Board and Trust – 2023 Meeting dates

Thurs 29th June, Thurs 28th Sep (AGM), Wed 6th Dec.

Meeting closed at 2.00pm

Mr Allwood thanked everyone for attending.
Next meeting – Thurs 29th June 2023 at the Banff Springs Hotel, Banff.