

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 8th September 2022 at 3.30pm held at Gordon Arms Hotel, Huntly.
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.

Jamie Mair and **Jason Gardiner** attended as a members of the public.

Present: **Andrew Allwood** (B), **Jim Cruickshank** (B&T), **Robert Shields** (B & T), **J Player** (B), **Rory Cooper** (B & T), **Frank Henderson** (B & T) (Turriff Angling Association & Turriff Community), **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), **Karen Muller** (Project officer).
{**B = Board member; T = Trustee or representative**}

Chairman: **Mr Andrew Allwood**

Apologies for Absence: **C Richard Marsden** (B), **Matthew Marsden** (B), **David Borthwick** (B & T), **Gordon Morison** (B), **Andrew Higgins** (B).

Mr Allwood informed members of the recent death of Mrs Pam Ingleby. Members sent their sincerest condolences to the family and friends of Mrs Ingleby.

Minutes of Meeting on 7th July 2022 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 7th July 2022 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 will be sent out for the 11 outstanding assessments from 10 proprietors.

AOCB- Conservation of Salmon An e-mail was received by the clerk from Mr Morison. Mr Allwood explained that Mr Morison is of the opinion that salmon and sea trout fishing should be banned for a period of 2 years and intensive predator control to be undertaken and to allow for new scientific studies with a set of results where no fish would have been caught by line. Mr Morison is also of the opinion that Scotland should implement a 100% catch and release policy for a minimum of 2 years and then reassessed. Rateable assessments would be reduced to 75% for a maximum of 2 years and then reassessed.

Following this a general discussion was had by all members. All members agreed in the circumstances we should continue as we are.

AOCB – Next Board Meeting

Mr Allwood informed all members of the next board meeting, Wednesday 7th December.

Mrs Roebuck reported that a suggestion was made to hold meetings at Banff Springs going forward due to better Internet Quality. All agreed.

Mr Miller suggested holding meetings at the Castle Hotel once refurbishment is completed. Mr Shields expressed Avochie House is also available for meetings.

The meeting then focused on Trust Business

Update on Financial Matters – DBI Trust

Mr Cruickshank explained that a budget was set in July and Mrs Roebuck has been doing monthly updates on income and expenditure. Mr Cruickshank has asked to keep monitoring the budget closely to avoid any unexpected events.

Report by Mr Miller and Mr Walters on DBI Trust work

Mr Miller and Mr Walters 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. Available on request.

Prominent discussions were made on the following:

Water Quality: Mr Walters explained that he's been working with James Hutton Institute to discuss what kits could be used to test different contaminants to build up a set of data and evidence when incidents do occur. **Details of guidelines and the three categories can be found on the September report, available on request.

Mr Shields enquired about the previously used continuous monitoring kits. Mr Walters explained the continuous monitoring kits are good at giving you the background level, but they are generally monitoring things that fit into the easy category and can't look at nutrients or contaminants going into the river.

Mr Shields expressed that it is a difficult situation. Clearly, the change has been profound in the ability of the ground to cope with changes in agriculture; the amount of arable is vast compared to what it was. All that has impacted on the ability of the catchment to retain water and act like a sponge. Consequently weather events have become "flashier" and although the water level has risen it tends to go back down again too rapidly. Mr Shields added that in hindsight a reservoir in the Cabrach would not have been a bad idea, it would have meant a constant water flow. Mr Shields feels a more proactive approach is necessary to retaining water in the upper catchment.

Water Temperature & Scarcity: This year the river temperature was frequently raised above 20 degrees Celcius particularly in the lower half of the river. Electro fishing had to be stopped multiple times because the limit is 18 degrees. Mr Walters went on to discuss water temperature summary graphs.

Bird Counts: Mr Allwood reported on behalf of Mr Stuart Cockersoll, he has observed that after the count has been completed for an extended period you will often see a larger number of birds on that day. Mr Miller explained that will be due to someone else moving them along. Mr Allwood suggested varying

things slightly next season whereby volunteers remain for a longer period after counting to see what happens. Mr Miller explained that would be classed as different type of average count which could be done for our own research but could not be submitted to the government.

Health and Safety

Nothing further to report.

Next meeting

Next Board/Trust meeting will be on Wednesday 7th December at the Banff Springs Hotel, Banff.

Meeting closed at 4:40pm

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