

## Kyle of Sutherland District Salmon Fishery Board

### Annual Public Meeting Draft Minutes

12<sup>th</sup> April 2017, 9.30am

#### Present

##### District Salmon Fishery Board

Keith Williams, (KW)  
George Skinner (GS)  
Richard Sankey (RS)  
John Green (JG)  
Ashe Windham (AW)  
Peter Routledge (PR)  
Michael Hasson (MH)  
Alex Hunter, by telephone link (AH)  
Nicky Griffiths (NG)

#### Public

Sandra Skinner (SS)  
William Thomson (WT)  
Charlie Brooke (CB)  
Michael Baird (MB)  
Nicholas Forman Hardy (NFH)  
Jonathan Mason (JH)  
Steven MacKenzie (SMK)

#### Apologies

Robbie Douglas Miller  
Tom Inglis  
Colin Gilmour  
William Patterson  
Richard Fyfe  
Charles Allan  
Stephen Gilchrist  
Gary Gruber

#### Absent

None

#### Welcome

RS welcomed the members of the Kyle of Sutherland District Salmon Fishery Board and the members of the public to the meeting. Due to a recent medical operation, Mr Robbie Douglas Miller was unable to attend or chair the meeting therefore RS would act as Chairman.

#### 2016 Annual Report

Copies of the combined fishery board and fishery trust 2016 Annual Report were available at the meeting and would shortly be available on the website. The report included a basic summary of accounts for both organisations. KW highlighted that salmon catches in 2016 were again disappointing with the early part of the season and September particularly poor. Enforcement activities remained at the core of the work undertaken. Projects such as Pearls in Peril were also undertaken during the year although this project had now ended. A major focus of activity was the smolt work on Loch Shin tributaries. RS noted that projects such as the Oykel scale reading programme undertaken by the Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries Trust and the Floy tagging programme had also greatly added to understanding of the fishery.

### Question and Answer Session

JM asked why the SSE income figure was slightly different between the years shown. KW replied that he believed this to be as a result of the way VAT had been shown in the accounts. RS noted that the agreement between SSE and the Board was soon to be renegotiated following the decision by SSE to trigger the relevant clause in the existing agreement.

PR noted that the depreciation figure appeared particularly high for such a small organisation. KW replied that he believed the high depreciation figure was an artefact of the decision to write down the value of the netting rights purchased by the Board over a very short timescale.

SS asked how the Board raised its assessment. KW responded that the system was a similar one to domestic or business rates. Valuations on the individual fisheries had been arrived at by the District Assessor and the Board subsequently set a 'pence in the pound' rate in order to obtain the level of income required to undertake its work programme.

SS asked if enforcement activities were undertaken on a daily basis and on all rivers in the district. KW responded that he did not wish to comment in particular detail on enforcement activities, but confirmed that enforcement took place through most of the year with all major rivers receiving regular visits from the enforcement team.

SS asked if the Board held historical records on artificial stocking of salmon in the catchment. KW agreed to undertake to search the records of the Board for information that may be available and provide them to SS.

SS asked how the Board obtained its catch information. KW explained that the proprietors of net and rod fisheries in the district were written to at the end of the season and asked to fill in a catch return form. Typically responses to these requests were positive and, indeed, proprietors were legally obliged to fill in the forms. SS further asked how fishing effort data was collected. KW responded that effort data was not routinely collected by either the Board or Marine Scotland Science in respect of the rod and line fishery. KW further noted that the lack of effort data was considered to be a major data gap in the Scottish salmon and sea trout fishery. One way of obtaining such data could be via a national rod licence, for example, but the Scottish Government has to date not chosen to utilise that option.

### AOB

None.

### Next Meeting Date

TBA.

### Meeting Closed.

ACTION POINTS				
Nº	Who	Action	Raised	Completed by:
1	KW	Establish what salmon stocking records are available for the Kyle area.	April 2017	As soon as possible
2	KW	Fix next meeting date.	April 2017	As soon as possible