

# **Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries Trust**

## **Ordinary Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2014, 8.30am  
via Conference Call**

### **Present**

Robbie Douglas Miller, Chair (RDM)  
Michael Brown (MB)  
John Green (JG)  
Tom Inglis (TI)  
Gregor Macleod (GM)  
Richard Sankey (RS)

### **Apologies**

Steven Mackenzie

### **Attending**

Audrey Campbell, Administrator (AC)  
Keith Williams, Director (KW)

### **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed everyone present and noted apologies.

### **Minutes of Meeting held 25<sup>th</sup> September 2014 – Approval and Adoption**

Minutes were adopted as an accurate record of the last meeting. No comments.

### **Matters Arising / Action Points**

A draft procedure (KSF/POL/34) for the regular audit of budget and bank accounts was circulated prior to the meeting.

The assessment of hatchery costs is in hand. An electronic diary system is in place and Hugh is keeping a detailed record of hours spent carrying out hatchery and other duties.

KW is working towards securing income to support the ongoing Upper Shin smolt project. He has supplied SSE with project costs and will meet with both SSE and SEPA to discuss these further on the 11<sup>th</sup> December. RDM asked KW to send the same costing documents to Richard Fyfe at SEPA as a matter of courtesy.

Other Board projects are taking up a great deal of staff time and any new projects will only be considered if there is capacity available.

RDM asked if there was scope for involvement in a possible catchment wide drain blocking/peatland restoration project which was discussed at last week's Oykel Proprietors meeting. RS advised that he has already discussed this with KW and there is a strong sense of goodwill from the Oykel proprietors to support a project of this type. MB has spoken to Andrew MacBride, SNH, regarding the Peatland Action fund and suggested that the Trust approach him expressing an interest in submitting a project application. It was thought that a catchment wide project, managed by the Trust, might prove very attractive to the funder. KW will contact Mr MacBride to gauge the level of interest prior to taking this further. MB offered to assist KW if required.

## **Directors Report**

KW has identified one or two possible projects on smaller burns in collaboration with the Moray Firth Trout Initiative. These will not generate income but are nonetheless important issues to address.

Alan Youngson has invoiced the Board for the consultation work completed for the SSF planning application. The final total was considerably less than expected. RDM requested that the Shin Proprietors are now invoiced for their contribution.

KW noted that the bulk of both his and AC's time is spent carrying out Board work. This will need to be reflected in the sharing of costs between the Board and Trust. KW will produce a report suggesting an appropriate apportionment for the next JMG meeting. This will be regularly reviewed and adjusted as priorities change. TI suggested that percentages should be set for core activities.

### Diebidale

KW is making one or two small amendments to his report to SEPA regarding the Diebidale Artificial Loch and Fish ladder. KW has asked SEPA to give a quick indication of whether the fund is likely to approve the application and hopes to get a response shortly. This will hopefully avoid continuing in this lengthy process if the application is likely to be rejected. If the final application is successful SEPA will fund an assessment of possible solutions by a qualified engineer. If the application is rejected by SEPA then the Trust will look at other ways in which to fund an engineering report.

### Genetics

Disappointingly, the genetics report being produced by Mark Coulson and Eric Verspoor has still not been received. KW met with them this week and has been advised that they are now running statistical analysis of the basic genetics received from Norway. This is a time consuming process but KW has been assured that the first set of results will be available before Christmas; an interim overall report by 15<sup>th</sup> January and the final report by the end of January 2015. Dr Verspoor had stressed the importance of having the report published in academic journals and peer reviewed.

If the final report is obtained prior to the Highland Council Planning meeting to discuss the SSF application, then this will be tabled as an addendum to the Board's submission. RDM suggested that if the final report has still not been received prior to the Council meeting but the interim report has, this could be submitted to the Council if it suggests compelling evidence of introgression.

KW advised that as both Mark and the project have now migrated from RAFTS to UHI there is some debate as to who will be paid for the work. KW has asked Chris Horrill, RAFTS to settle this with Melanie Smith, UHI and advise as soon as possible.

RS had been under the impression that the study had included Oykel samples, however this is not the case. If evidence of introgression is found then he recommended that the work is extended to include Oykel samples, particularly as the Oykel is an SAC.

If the planning application is approved, options for further action will depend on the outcome of the genetics report.

## **Finance**

Shin smolt project work will increase significantly next year with the addition of PIT tagging on two of the main tributaries. As discussed earlier, costs have been submitted to SSE in order that Alastair Stephen and Bob Olivant can discuss the possibility of contributing funding prior to another meeting with SEPA on 11<sup>th</sup> December. If SSE does not contribute other options will have to be explored urgently.

TI asked about the lack of costing for interpretation and reporting. KW advised that at present this is carried out by SEPA, the Trust having only collected and supplied the data. KW will discuss with SEPA who will be responsible for reporting in future. TI was concerned that reports remain the property of KSF.

TI also felt it is necessary to clarify the Trust's philosophy for funding – does it expect beneficiaries identified to contribute? RDM suggested that, due to time constraints, this be discussed more fully at the next meeting.

RDM asked if the project could be extended to cover the autumn smolt run as KSF have very little information on this. KW will give this some thought but suggested that it be kept separate at this stage. RDM suggested that these additional points for future research be brought to the attention of SEPA at the December meeting.

#### Fundraising

RS has restarted the process of raising the remaining balance of the office purchase. He is reasonably confident that this will be completed over the winter months.

Core funding still needs to be addressed. TI suggested identifying a percentage of the current levy charged by the Board to be passed on to the Trust

RS left the meeting for another appointment.

#### **Office**

KW was asked to produce a 'wish list' which was posted in Dropbox for information. There is an immediate need to get started with the basement works in order to comply with the Highland Council building warrant.

TI suggested a lease agreement be drawn up for the Board. RDM asked AC to produce a draft and send to him for comment. The draft will then be discussed at the next JMG meeting.

#### **Governance**

A draft of 'KSF/POL/34 Office Procedures – Financial' was circulated prior to the meeting. No comments were received and the draft was unanimously approved. Approval will also be sought from Board members at their March meeting. KW and AC are already adhering to this procedure and find it works well.

#### **Current / Ongoing projects**

Covered earlier in meeting.

#### **AOCB**

As a result of the publication of the Wild Fisheries Review, Andrew Wallace, ASFB has enquired if the Kyle Board would like to take part in initial trials. KW has agreed in principle to take part. All Trustees were happy that the Kyle should be included if formally invited.

#### **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2015 in the Trust office. RDM requested that a budget for 2015/16 be tabled at that meeting

#### **Meeting Closed**

<b>ACTION POINTS – carried forward</b>			
<b>No</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Completed by:</b>
1	KW	Assess hatchery costs	Christmas 2014

<b>ACTION POINTS – from this meeting</b>			
<b>No</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Completed by:</b>
1	KW	Send Shin Project costings to Richard Fyfe, SEPA	Immediate
2	KW	Contact Andrew MacBride, SNH re Peatland Action Fund	By next meeting
3	AC	Invoice Shin Proprietors for Youngson report	Immediate
4	KW	produce a report suggesting an appropriate apportionment of KW/AC salary costs for the next JMG meeting	By next meeting
5	KW	Discuss reporting responsibilities for Shin smolt work with SEPA	As soon as possible
6	AC	Add discussion of funding philosophy to next agenda	Next meeting
7	KW	Advise SEPA of possible additional areas to look at in future as part of Upper Shin smolt project	11 <sup>th</sup> December meeting
8	AC	Draw up draft lease for Board from Trust and send to RDM for comment	By next meeting
9	AC	Add KSF/POL/34 to Board Dropbox folder for approval at next Board meeting	March 2015
10	KW/AC	Produce draft budgets for next meeting	March 2015