

KYLE OF SUTHERLAND FISHERIES TRUST

ORDINARY TRUSTEE MEETING

HELD ON FRIDAY 24TH JANUARY 2014 VIA CONFERENCE CALL

DRAFT MINUTE

Trustees Present

Robbie Douglas Miller, Chair (RDM)
John Green (JG)
Steven Mackenzie (SM)
Gregor Macleod (GM)
Richard Sankey (RS)

Apologies

Tom Inglis

Absent

Michael Brown

Attending

Audrey Campbell, Administrator (AC)

1. Welcome

RDM welcomed all new Trustees and outlined the protocol for the conference call.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Tom Inglis. No apologies were received from Michael Brown.

3. Minutes of previous meeting, adoption and matters arising.

Draft minutes of Ordinary meeting held 20th November 2013 were adopted with no comments.
Proposed by SM, seconded by GM.

Actions Outstanding

AC to ask PC to circulate figures to Trustees regarding Upper Habitat Project with Alladale.
AC/TI to review membership data.
AC/TI to set up procedure for regular check of budget and bank reconciliation.

AC and SM have been added as signatories to the bank account, awaiting confirmation from the bank.

4. Overview of new structure of Kyle Fisheries

RS reminded Trustees of the proposed new structure, replacing the past model which is considered unsustainable. The objective is to emulate the highest standard of Board/Trust models such as that adopted by the River Dee, retaining a single Chair and Director whilst maintaining the integrity and independence of both the Trust and the Board. In future the Board will concentrate on its statutory obligations, whilst the Trust will concentrate on non-statutory, project and scientific work.

It is anticipated that both organisations will adopt a single strategic management approach. The new director will report to and be supported by a Joint Management Committee, who will in turn report to Board and Trust members. This committee will be expected to meet monthly via conference call. Minutes will be distributed to Trustees and Board members and other appropriate groups, keeping all parties fully informed and aware of all activities.

It is also essential that both organisations adopt a single formal policy position on issues such as conservation, fish farms, hydro developments etc.

It is hoped that the Trust and Board will also conduct meetings more regularly by conference call to address communication issues and the long gaps between physical meetings.

5. Overview of the new director application and summary of next stages.

RDM summarised the process carried out to appoint a new director. Following the appointment of an interview panel, the post was widely advertised, applications received and sifted and a short list identified. Four candidates were taken to interview last week and a fairly extensive interview carried out. Board and Trust staff met with all the candidates, who were also given a tour of the catchment. During the interview candidates were asked to give a formal presentation before being asked a series of set questions. A matrix system was used to score the candidates and a clear leader was identified. The interview panel then held a detailed and thorough discussion before reaching their final unanimous conclusion. An offer letter was sent to the chosen candidate.

RDM was delighted to announce that Keith Williams has now accepted the position of Director of Kyle Fisheries. His provisional start date is 21st April 2014. The Board and Trustees have been informed and a wider communication will be distributed next week to other stakeholder groups.

As the annual Kyle Newsletter has not yet been finalised it was agreed to include an announcement about Keith's appointment and a short biography. RS will draft and send to AC for inclusion

RS has agreed to draft an induction programme for Keith, as well as a list of objectives and priorities for the first 12 months of his post.

GM confirmed that Keith has resigned as Chair of the Kyle of Sutherland Angling Association as his appointment will create a conflict of interest.

6. Role of Audrey

Audrey is currently working three days per week, typically Monday, Wednesday and Friday, although this is very flexible. Her workload is nominally split between the Board and Trust. RS advised that once Keith starts, it will be up to him to identify people resources and this may well result in an increased role for Audrey, who has confirmed that she has the capacity to increase her working hours.

Options for office premises are being explored as the current office is not suitable. Quotes have been received from Portakabin to site an office at the hatchery. RS will make enquiries into vacant properties which may be available for lease locally.

7. Summary of current/ongoing Trust projects

RDM advised that in future Trustees would be nominated to lead on projects or operational matters, acting as a single point of contact for the Director and reporting progress at meetings. GM and SM agreed to act as contacts for current projects.

All felt that the project report presented at the previous meeting was more reflective of activities rather than projects and that some of these activities were the responsibility of the Board, not the Trust.

All agreed that the Upper Shin Smolt Trapping and Trucking project needed review before a decision was made whether to continue for the 2014 season. JG agreed to carry out a review. AC will provide him with project information and he will discuss with Hugh Mackenzie and RS before making any recommendations.

8. Projects planned for 2014

It was agreed that no new projects would be started at the present time.

The Moray Firth Trout Initiative project is ongoing. The Trust is committed to this for the next two years and contributes £2000 annually. AC carries out administration for the project which is reimbursed to the Trust by the project.

The ongoing Oykel Scale Sampling Project is fully funded by a private donor. This is linked to the FASMOP project headed by Mark Coulson, which aims to identify different genetic groups in the Oykel catchment. Reports from the first phase of the FASMOP project are now being published; however the project is unfortunately 2-3 years behind schedule.

9. Summary of financial position and budget

RDM reviewed the current budget and made minor amendments. AC will update and republish in Dropbox. The regularly updated budget spreadsheet will remain in Dropbox in order that Trustees can refer to it when necessary.

All agreed that now that the new Director has been appointed, RDM should formally advise Pete Campbell that his Project Director role can now cease and request a final invoice for his time. The Trustees wish to retain the ability to seek advice from Pete on a paid basis when necessary.

An amount of £9,064 is being held in project funds for 'Shin Restoration/Smolt Tagging'. This money has been sitting in a ring-fenced budget for many years and is thought to be a surplus from an old project. AC has previously tried to identify where it originated from without success. RDM suggested that if AC can establish that it is no longer restricted by any parameters then it can be spent on future projects. It was thought that this may have been donated by Upper Shin proprietors for RST work on the Tirry. AC to check.

10. Allocation of joint Board/Trust costs – Office, Director, Admin etc.

Following discussion, all agreed that costs should be split 50/50 until the Director can review the budget and identify an appropriate ratio, adjusting this on a regular basis.

RDM pointed out the need to identify future funding in order to keep finances on an even keel. At present there is breathing space, but the current situation is clearly not sustainable.

All agreed that the budget will be signed off at the March meeting.

11. Review of Governance and Oversight issues

Tom Inglis has agreed to take ownership of this area and will identify needs to be addressed in the coming months. It is hoped that by the end of 2014 any issues will have been addressed.

12. Review of Trustees and independence of Trustees from Board.

RDM had previously circulated an email asking the Trustees to consider co-opting new Trustees, as if all four current Trustees are accepted as co-opted members of the Board, the independence of the Trust may be questioned externally.

It was agreed that the Trust should aspire to having at least half of Trustees fully independent. It was noted that any Trustee may be present at a Board meeting as an attendee without being co-opted.

After discussion, GM suggested that two Trustees could be nominated to attend each Board meeting, those nominated could be varied for each meeting, giving greater flexibility. All agreed that this option would be presented to the Board.

Trustees were asked to give some thought to who might be invited to join the board of Trustees in order to fill gaps in the current skillset, particularly in finance.

13. AOB

RS proposed thanks to the Chair.

14. Date of next meeting

RDM Suggested another conference call in early March. AC will conduct a doodle poll to establish a convenient date for all.

Meeting Closed

ACTIONS - taken forward

Who	Details	Completed By
AC	Ask PC to circulate Alladale figures as per previous actions	As soon as possible
AC/TI	Review membership data	By 28 th March meeting
AC/TI	Set up procedure for regular audit of budget and bank accounts	As soon as possible

ACTIONS - from this meeting

Who	Details	Completed By
RDM	Communicate with external groups regarding Director appointment	Immediate
AC/RS	Draft article regarding appointment of Keith for inclusion in the spring newsletter	Immediate
RS	Draft induction programme and list of objectives and priorities for the first 12 months of the Director's post	By early March
RS	Investigate possible lease of office building .	Immediate
JG	Review Upper Shin Smolt Project and report recommendations to Trustees.	Within 2 weeks
AC	Identify whether Shin Restoration project restricted funds in the budget can be used for future projects	By 28 th March meeting
AC	Circulate poll to identify conference call date in early March	Immediate