**KYLE OF SUTHERLAND DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD TRUST**

**MEETING TITLE: ANNUAL MEETING OF QUALIFIED PROPRIETORS**

**Date: Friday 27th September 2019**

**Time: 9.30am**

**Place: Kyle Fisheries Office, Ardgay**

**MEETING MINUTES** *(Draft)*

**Chair: Richard Sankey**

**Minute taker: Jacqui Hamblin**

**In Attendance**

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| **Board** | **Attending** |
| Richard Sankey, Chair (RS) John Green (JG)Alex Hunter (AH)Nicky Griffiths (NG)Ashe Windham (AW)Robbie Douglas Miller (RDM)   | Keith Williams (KW) Director (KF)Steven MacKenzie (SM) (KSFT) |
| **Apologies** | **Guests** |
| Gary GruberPeter RoutledgeHamish McFarlaneMichael Baird |  |

1. **Richard Sankey welcomed those attending and noted apologies**
2. **In Memory of Charlie Menzies**

The Board had recently been informed of the sad death of Charles (Charlie) Menzies, former fisheries superintendent. Originally from Perthshire, Charlie joined the Board in 1989 direct from the army. We understand he was an RSM and served in Hong Kong amongst other places. He left the Board in 2001 to take up to the post of Bursar at Uppingham School in Rutland. He is survived by his wife Heather and two children.

1. **Minutes of Meeting held 12th October 2018 were approved and adopted**
2. **Action Points & Matters Arising**

B/Fwd. Actions

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| No | Who | Action | Raised | Completed by |
| 1 | KW | Annual account dates –speak to the accountant and examine best new dates. Action KW- Accountant advises to leave as is | October 2018 | Completed |
| 2 | JH | Check on full audit requirements on our accounts. Action JH Accountant advised not required | October 2018 | Completed |
| 3 | KW | Annually review the hatchery operation and relevance. Action KW | October 2018 | Ongoing |
| 4 | JH | Asset register value of netting and fishing rights clarify with accountant. Action JH – in hand | October 2018 | December 2018 |
| 5 | KW | CAR License – Check if still paying SEPA and if still valid to hold. Action KW – spoken to SEPA statutory return, letter received from SEPA ask for returns sent them 4. They have not collected CAR license in 4 years. There is no connection to local level. If for environmental benefit should not be paying at all. | October 2018 | Complete |
| 6 | JH | Insurance against tax investigation. Check with NFU. Action JH – we are not insured against Tax investigation. Annual review in October will request quote, RS advised wise to do. Action JH. Agreed VAT formula with revenue | October 2018 | December 2018 |

1. **Chairman’s Report**

Despite the dry summer in 2018 salmon catches were in line with previous years and early indications appear to suggest that the 2019 season will be broadly similar. Overall the fishery has had a strong year. The Board has been engaged in very interesting project work including the NEPS electro-fishing programme, tagging salmon smolts as part of the Atlantic Salmon Trust’s project which will in turn inform the Missing Salmon Alliance. Transportation of smolts from Loch Shin tributaries was undertaken again. The Oykel sediment fingerprinting project had shifted its focus to the Shin as the former had remained remarkably clear this year whereas the Shin appeared to have problems with the sediment. The staff had all worked hard during the year and deserved the thanks of the proprietors.

1. **Director’s Report – including activities of the Board for the year to date and proposed activities for 2019/20**

**2019 KYLE DSFB STATUTORY ANNUAL REPORT**

**Fishery Performance 2018**

* The heavy rainfall in September 2018 resulted in the best total for the month for many years. The total catch for the season was slightly under 3,000 salmon and grilse. Ironically, for the second time in recent years the autumn component of the catches failed the NASCO rod catch assessment. The Board already recommends that all fish are returned in September. Catches for the 2019 season appear to be reasonable to date, however this report has been prepared prior to the end of the fishing season. Sea trout catches, however, remain a concern. Catch and release rates for salmon and grilse presently stand at around 97%.

**Activities 2018-2019**

* A comprehensive review of activities and fishery performance for the 2018 calendar year has again been produced and is available on the website. This report is produced in conjunction with the Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries Trust and includes accounts for the 2017/18 year. The accounts for the 2017/18 financial year will be incorporated into the 2019 annual report. This is anticipated to be available in early 2020.
* The website has been revamped and includes much more information on Board and Trust activities as well as providing information with respect to fishing opportunities.
* Enforcement remains the core activity of the Board and regular patrols have been undertaken both in the sea and in inland waters. Rod and line issues continued to provide the bulk of activity. Additionally, visits were again made to restaurants in the district to ascertain the origin of wild sea trout being sold within this district. We continue to liaise with Police Scotland and neighbouring fishery boards.
* The hatchery has not been utilised in 2018 although it continues to be maintained in order that it can be potentially utilised at short notice.
* Engagement with Marine Scotland Projects and working groups continues to develop. The Board and Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries Trust are project partners in a number of Marine Scotland Initiatives including the present national electro-fishing monitoring.
* Targeted juvenile salmon monitoring continues as does smolt trapping and tagging. Projects of this nature typically involve collaboration with the Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries Trust and partners such as SSE and SEPA.

**Consultations**

* A number of consultations were received in 2018 and early 2019. Consultations were, as ever, wide ranging with responses to local forestry management plans sitting alongside national issues such as proposed alterations to fishery management structures in Scotland. The Board aims to respond to all consultations received timeously.

**Predator Control**

* The Board remains an active participant in the Moray Firth Seal Management Plan and is also part of a coalition of Moray Firth fishery boards that collectively applies for a licence to shoot a limited quantity of piscivorous birds as an aid to scaring. In recent years a licence to shoot a small number of piscivorous birds has been received following the submission of an application to SNH. Counts of birds at a catchment level are undertaken by a combination of bailiffs and river workers in order to provide supporting information. Efforts in terms of scaring birds typically concentrate on the period leading up to and including the smolt run.

**Complaints**

* No formal complaints were received during the year.
* Statutory good governance obligations are placed on district salmon fishery boards as defined in law by section 46 of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003. They comprise the original obligations placed on boards by the 2003 Act together with those introduced through amendments of the 2003 Act by the Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013 which came into force on the 16th September 2013. The purpose of the obligations is to enhance openness, transparency and accountability of the management of salmon fisheries by district salmon fishery boards. They bring together existing best practice to ensure that all boards act in a manner consistent with bodies operating in the public sphere. Key activities covered by these obligations include:

• Annual reports and accounts

• Meetings of the board

• Complaints procedures

• Register of member’s interests.

* In order to comply with these obligations an annual public meeting and annual meeting of the qualified proprietors was held in 2019 and 2018 respectively. Meeting notices and minutes of all meetings held are forwarded to the Scottish Government as is a copy of the Annual Report. Meetings are advertised on the Kyle Fisheries website as well as at the office building in Ardgay. A complaints procedure is included in the policies section of the website and a register of members interests is maintained at the Kyle Fisheries office.

**Future Activities**

* Future activities will continue in line with our statutory obligations.
1. **Adoption of draft accounts to year end 31 May 2019 –**

RDM- Legal costs appear high -was this for the Invercharron ownership discussions? RS replied that it was. The situation now is that discussion between holder of angling rights and the estate are being undertaken. KW added that the legal contingency in the budget had been increased in anticipation of any developing legal issues. RS understood that the chairman of Lower Oykel was discussing the issue with representatives of Invercharron Estate.

AH – asked for an explanation of the aquaculture donation of £24K. KW replied that £12K from Migdale and £12K from Cooke had been donated in support of the trapping exercise at the Merkland end of Loch Shin. Any data on fish captured, potential escapees etc. would be publicly available.

The accounts were adopted.

1. **AOCB -**

JH proposed paperless meetings. SM advised that he has a 100” screen and new projector.

RS advised to make meeting more vibrant and attract more to attend, we should invite guest speakers to future meetings.

**Actions C/Fwd.**

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Meeting Closed: 10.05am

Date & time of next meeting: TBA