

Kyle of Sutherland District Salmon Fishery Board



MEETING TITLE: Board Ordinary Meeting
Meeting Date: Friday 24th September 2021
Meeting Time: 10.35am
Meeting Place: Kyle Fisheries Office, Ardgay & Via Video Conference Call

MEETING MINUTES (Draft)

Chair/Facilitator: Ashe Windham **Minute taker:** Jacqui Hamblin

In Attendance

Board	Attending
Ashe Windham (AW) Chair Richard Sankey (RS) Keith Williams, (KW) Clerk Alex Hunter (AH)	Steven Mackenzie (SM) KSFT Sean Robertson (SR) KSDSFB Finlay McCulloch (FM) KSFT Michael Baird (Public)
Apologies	
John Green Rob Whitson Nicky Griffiths Alistair Harington Hamish Macfarlane Gary Gruber Chris Fletcher Williams Patterson J & A Greenwood Naveed Bhatti John McCrorie	

1. **Welcome** – AW welcome everyone to the meeting and accepted apologies.
2. **Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held Friday 18th June 2021.**
 - I. **Adoption & Approval**
The minutes from 18th June 2021 were approved
 - II. **Open actions and matters arising**

No	Action Title	Open Actions	Owner	Raised	Complete by
1	CARRON GLEN BEAG	Action KW - disseminate times and dates of plate being changed at next Carron proprietors meeting and to write a draft document	KW KW/SR/	June 2019	Ongoing

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		<p>explaining the present situation.</p> <p>Action KW/SR/IM - talk about the feasibility of introducing a sonar device to monitor movement of fish when the ground sluice is opened. KW Alternative strategy being developed i.e., compromise flow to negate need for plate changing. Sonar element therefore redundant. KW recently spoke to SEPA and asked for them to check on progress being made by SSE. Richard Fyfe SEPA is retiring in May 2021, it may take another 12 months to get someone else in place. KW - still a live issue, spoken to RF he is trying to get update from SSE on flow gauging.</p> <p><i>Keith Beaton SEPA Dingwall – Action KW pick this up again. There is movement in terms of representatives. RF retired, Douglas Sinclair; Shin side, tends to do more on the enforcement side, still not entirely sure in terms with ongoing issues. More engaged with SEPA at higher level. Need to pick up locally on Carron & Cassley.</i></p>	IM		
2	HEALTH & SAFETY	<p>Health & Safety policy to be updated.</p> <p>Review undertaken. Requires final staff meeting to formally complete process. Action KW still to complete as felt virtual meeting would not work well. Open air meeting next week. Continually having to change due to COVID. Revised H&S by September 2021 update Trap safety. <i>Meeting set for 12th</i></p>	KW/SR	October 2018	Ongoing

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		<i>October 2021. Make amendments and ratify.</i>			
3	SSE AGREEMENT	Draft received was unacceptable and request made for more concise agreement. SSE advise it is with their legal department RS. Doubt we are vulnerable in meantime. Alastair Stephen has informed KW that a draft is imminent. The five-year lifespan of the agreement will commence from point of signing not from when negotiations were completed three years ago. Update from Alastair Stephen by June. SSE intend to start 5-year term when agreement is in place. <i>No resolution yet. Heard nothing further.</i>	KW	October 2018	Ongoing
4	KEEP EM WET	“Keep ‘em Wet” campaign seems to have lost momentum and new material still not available. Action SR look elsewhere. SR and Daniel Logie keen to do video on best practice. New material recently placed on Kyle Fisheries social media platform. Website will be updated shortly. SR action. Website updated, created a catch and release page on website and links to resources. SMK link to article in Fish World Mag. Publish further afield. Poster for fishing huts, catch and release website, used SMK video. <i>Poster done, not distributed yet. SMK wrote article, is going to be in trout and salmon next month. SR link thru our website. Distribute to board members as PDF.</i>	SR	October 2018	Ongoing

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5	INVERAN BRIDGE	Deterioration of Inveran Bridge – now in danger of further collapse. Go back to HC and ask for evidence that they do not own it. Action KW. <i>KW has had virtual and face to face meetings with HC. HC seeking to identify ownership. Barriers are in place at bridge. HC - have date in diary to do search once covid restrictions lifted. Spoke to HC again, still no access to register, will carry on chasing. Overtaken by growth of saplings on bridge. Access is an issue. Discussed at JMG meeting.</i>	KW	April 2020	ASAP
6	PREDATOR GROUPS	KW to re-engage with predator groups and push for more licences to control piscivorous birds. KW still speaking to relevant parties re general issues of predation. Do not have Seal license at the moment. Application sent in March. Keep communications open with Alan Wells on subject. <i>Not getting a seal licence and looks unlikely in future years.</i>	KW	Sept 2020	ASAP
7	CARRON PROPRIETORS MEETING	Carron management plan. KW to set up meeting with Carron Proprietors. <i>Almost ready to go. Will now Incorporate Riverwoods within the plan. Discuss donations with Carron proprietors.</i>	KW	March 2021	ASAP
8	TEMPERATURE LOGGERS	KW to ensure SMK is kept in loop on any discussions. <i>MS network. Trial small loggers on rivers, Bluetooth to phone. Action KW get some ordered. Action KW get data set from SMK.</i>	KW	March 2021	Immediately
9	KYLE CHRONICLE POACHING/	<i>AW to draft article for Kyle Chronicle.</i>	AW	June 2021	Closed

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	RIVERWOODS				
10	BCF CBEC DESIGN	<i>SR to provide RS with view before approval.</i>	SR	June 2021	Completed
11	CARRON RADIO TRACKING	<i>Provide feedback on 2021 tagging.</i>	KW	June 2021	Completed
12	RESOURCE STRATEGY	<i>JH to add this to next JMG agenda.</i>	JH/KW	June 2021	ASAP
13	GLENCALVIE FALLS	<i>KW to ensure monitoring is conducted.</i>	KW	June 2021	Closed
14	MEETING INVITES	<i>JH to send out calendar invites for March 2022.</i>	JH	June 2021	Completed

Matters arising

MB – Inveran bridge 200 year anniversary in 2022. We should do something to highlight its condition and bring attention to the issue.

SMK – Have we received our bird licence? KW replied that an application had been submitted and we should hear back soon.

RS – There are long-term concerns about the ability of boards to obtain licences. We will be left with methods of non-lethal deterrents.

KW – We have trialed a different type of temperature logger. One is in place past Glen Beag dam that is giving us good data. One benefit to the ghillies is being able to get an application on their phone and download the data. SMK - The Oykel have a network of loggers out. **Action KW (8)** Get data set from SMK. RS recalled that someone looked at the first 9- 10 years of data, possibly from the Gatty Marine Lab. It would be worth revisiting the data. KW suggested that demonstrating water temperatures are rising, for example, would increase the imperative to do something about it. SR - The software makes it easy to export and load into R and ask specific questions. SMK - it could potentially prove that by getting trees in the ground we are mitigating for climate change. There are currently 6 loggers out on the Oykel system.

KW – In terms of the Carron radio tracking, the bulk of the tagged fish have recently been located. The plate is due to be changed at the beginning of October. A major rethink on this project is required as not enough fish are making it above the falls. The use of a trap above the falls is being considered. Recently 3 fish had been located in the Blackwater side of the catchment. That in itself can be considered important. A full report will be produced in the winter months and will be disseminated. It is disappointing not to have completed what we set out to do. We have invested in new equipment and are testing that now which will help in future years.

SMK is happy to help Sean on the Shin gravels project.

3. Standard Items

- a) Declarations of interest in agenda items to be discussed.
- b) Health & Safety – no reportable incidents. Near misses in directors report.
- c) Complaints – no formal complaints.
- d) Governance – under review.

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4. Directors Report – Report was circulated prior to the meeting. Items discussed by exception.

- **AST** – Discussions have been ongoing about involvement in the 2022 programme. Preliminary results for some of the 2021 work has been viewed.
- **SR - Apprenticeship scheme.** We were approached by Lairg Learning Centre to be part of the Kyle of Sutherland apprenticeship scheme. The amount of funding available is £3K per year. It would involve undertaking a modern apprenticeship alongside other work. It would sit well with a rural skills modern apprenticeship. We have only received basic information at the moment. A key condition is the apprentice must reside within the Kyle area. The minimum wage for first year is very low. £3k is not a massive contribution to overall costs of employment. It was agreed to check if there are other resources available e.g. wind farm money.

Action SR (9)

- **SMK** - Do we still have a sea going boat? KW replied that we still have the Sea Rider, although we have been unable to use it much recently because of Covid. We are the last board in the north, along with the Northern Board, that has a boat capable of going to sea. We tend to patrol the Kyle by canoe. SMK - It is important to have a presence out there. KW the boat is still coded and maintained, and we will continue to use it.
- **SMK** – SR carries a lot of the gear to sites; do we still have an Argo and quad as part of the armoury? It would be a lot more efficient to use the Argo to transport equipment to remote sites. KW - The Argo has mostly been used for the tree planting. Three bailiffs have their ATV tickets. We still have one quad bike. We can consider putting Sean through Argo course as logistically it makes sense. It could be tied in with Riverwoods project. **Action SR (10)** AH advised that the board can also use Dounie Estate Argo outwith busy periods.
- **SMK** – Adult Scale sampling. Are the weights factored into the data? KW replied that Marine Scotland asked for fish to be taken as close to the sea as possible. There are not the amount of fresh fish coming into the Kyle late in the season as there used to be; the fish being caught in August and September are largely old fish. An assessment is required as to how fresh the fish are.
- **RS** - Can we ask that SSE aim to get 70% of smolts out on the upper Shin system. Their argument utilises examples like Loch Lomond and the Conon system. The 20% rule was put in place by SEPA and we have never been given a satisfactory explanation as to how this figure was arrived at.

5. Budget & Finance covered within directors' report

6. Projects Update

- i. Riverwoods – A presentation was made by Hugh Chalmers **Action JH (11)** share presentation after the meeting.
- ii. Trust Projects – eDNA, NEPS & NIPS were briefly summarised. In terms of the BCF Shin gravels project, SR noted that an updated design was only received at the start of September. It was decided through various meetings with contractors, that it would not be possible to complete the project this year and SR requested

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NatureScot funding be carried forward until next financial year. He was still waiting to hear back from NatureScot, but he felt that a strong case had been made for it.

- iii. Auction 2021 – Aim is to raise funds to go towards employing a Climate Resilience and Habitat Officer

7. Date of Summer & Autumn Meetings

Friday 24th June 2022 9.30am Board Ordinary Meeting

Friday 23rd September 2022 9.30am Annual Qualified Proprietors followed by Board

8. AOCB

AH left meeting 12.00

Meeting closed: 12.12

Next meetings:

Friday 25th March 2022 9.30am Annual Public followed by Board Ordinary Meeting

Friday 24th June 2022 9.30am Board Ordinary Meeting

Friday 23rd September 2022 9.30am Annual Qualified Proprietors followed by Board Ordinary Meeting

Open & New Actions C/Fwd.

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9	KYLE APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME	Check if there are other resources out there. Wind farm money, Community Council funding for training etc.	SR	September 2021	March 2022
10	USE OF ARGO FOR SITE WORK	Investigate Argo course for SR	SR	September 2021	March 2022
11	Hugh Chalmers Presentation	JH to share after meeting	JH	September 2021	Completed
12	RESOURCE STRATEGY	JH to add this to next JMG agenda.	JH/KW	June 2021	ASAP