

Fisheries Management Scotland Board Meeting

Minutes

8 September 2017



Present

Alister Jack (Chairman)
Alison Baker
Mark Bilsby
Roger Brook
Douglas Dobie
Brian Doran
Alasdair Laing
Simon McKelvey
Mary Nicholson
David Summers
Bill Whyte

In attendance

Alan Wells, Chief Executive
Brian Davidson, Director of Communications & Administration

Apologies for absence

Chris Conroy

1. Chairmanship/Update from Alister Jack

AJ confirmed his willingness to continue as Chairman of Fisheries Management Scotland. It was agreed to appoint a Vice Chairman to maintain oversight of Fisheries Management Scotland business and provide support for staff where required. AJ suggested MB for the role of Vice Chairman and this was approved by the Board.

Alastair Mitchell from Marine Scotland was invited to attend the Board meeting, but was unable to do so. However, both Alastair Mitchell and Marine Scotland Director, Graham Black have indicated their willingness to meet with the Board and it was agreed that both should be invited to attend a future board meeting.

2. Register of Interests

The register was circulated before the meeting. Some changes were suggested to ensure consistency in the approach. This will be a standing item at future Board meetings. **ACTION:**
BD/AW

3. Matters arising from previous minutes

- **Mission Statement** – the agreed statement is now published on the website.

- **Wild Fisheries Reform** – a short update was provided on wild fisheries reform. As expected, the proposed WFR Bill was not included in the Scottish Government’s Programme for Government for 2017-18. It was recognised that Brexit is dominating business, but that the Cabinet Secretary had indicated in Parliament that legislation might be introduced in year 3. Fisheries Management Scotland has supported a number of members in discussion with Marine Scotland about possible mergers. It was agreed that Fisheries Management Scotland would continue to promote cooperative working and area mergers where appropriate. The Board underlined the need for Fisheries Management Scotland to lead the process, particularly in relation to fisheries management planning and enforcement priorities. A key element will be to identify areas of reform that do not require primary legislation, but it was also recognised that the current legislation can be a barrier to some elements of reform, particularly DSFB mergers. It was agreed to identify priorities for future change for discussion at the members meeting in November. **ACTION: AW/BD to identify areas for prioritisation – for Board comment.**

4. Update on Pink Salmon

Fisheries Management Scotland continue to collate information from members, and liaise with Marine Scotland, SNH, SEPA and colleagues across the NE Atlantic. Viable eggs have now been found in several rivers. It was noted that pink salmon redds can occur in different in-river habitat to that used by *Salmo salar*. A GB Rapid Risk Assessment has been produced, and this has been informed by the Scottish experience. Fisheries Management Scotland will be attending a meeting convened by SNH of national and international experts in September.

It was recognised that legislative change was required to ensure that potential enforcement issues relating to pink salmon and other invasive non-native fish eg Rainbow trout could be addressed. Interim arrangements would be explored with Scottish Government in the meantime.

A suggested approach for dealing with unexpected situations on Scottish rivers, setting out the respective roles of Fisheries Management Scotland and its members, was discussed. This approach would apply to all types of ‘crisis’ management and would help with the management of information. It was agreed that Fisheries Management Scotland are ideally placed to act as a conduit of information for members and the approach was agreed.

5. 2018 Budget & subscriptions

The Board were generally content with the draft budget and proposed membership income and these would be proposed for approval at the AGM. It was agreed that specific approval would be sought from the membership for utilising reserves should specific legal advice relating to WFR be required. Whilst the budget does not provide for media/PR services, it was agreed that options for PR services would be scoped in order to aid Fisheries Management Scotland with strategic messaging, such as the societal value of fisheries management in Scotland. Options to fund such services from out with subscription income would be explored.

6. Constitution of Fisheries Management Scotland as a company limited by guarantee

A proposed new constitution, which was designed to replicate the existing Fisheries Management Scotland constitution was discussed. It was agreed that Board members would provide any outstanding comments by 15 September, in order that the document could be circulated to the membership well in advance of the AGM. **ACTION: All**

7. 2017 AGM & members meeting

AGM – The draft agenda was discussed and agreed.

Members meeting – A number of possible topics for discussion with the membership were discussed, including: sources of finance/project income for members, sector priorities for legislative change and policy priorities and associated strategies. Discussion on legislative and policy priorities should be informed by realistic assessment of funding possibilities. Fisheries Management Scotland will also explore the potential to identify priorities for group purchasing schemes – this would be further explored before the meeting. **ACTION: AW/BD**

2018 Review & Conference

The process for developing priorities and content for the 2018 review and conference was discussed. It was agreed that a small working group would be convened to support the staff. The importance of increased sponsorship income to support the review was emphasised. AL agreed to discuss this with Strutt & Parker. **ACTION: AL**

Options for sponsorship of the Fisheries Management Scotland were discussed. Contact details for potential sponsors would be supplied to AW to follow up. **ACTION: All**

8. AOB

Grilse – The poor grilse run in 2017, following the poor run in 2016 was discussed. It was agreed that Fisheries Management Scotland would collate information from members with a view to providing further information. **ACTION: AW/BD to verify the current situation and produce a note for the membership.**

Conservation measures – DD outlined the forthcoming consultations for conservation measures in England and Wales, in particular potential measures for the NE England net fisheries which take a large proportion of fish destined for Scottish rivers. It was agreed that Fisheries Management Scotland and East Coast DSFBs would respond to the consultation.

Red vent – MN reported some incidences of red vent in Galloway and asked whether this was apparent elsewhere. This did not appear to be the case, but would be kept under review.

Apprenticeship scheme – SM advised on the proposed development of a broad apprenticeship scheme, which would encompass some fisheries elements. An update would be provided following a meeting with LANTRA.

Amoebic Gill Disease – BW highlighted the problems being faced by the salmon farming industry and asked if anything was known about possible effects on wild fish. The challenge of identifying disease in wild migratory fish during their marine migration was noted but the possibility of disease transfer would be kept under review.