

Fisheries Management Scotland

Meeting minutes



22 June 2018

Directors present

Alister Jack (Chairman)
Alison Baker
Mark Bilsby
Roger Brook
Douglas Dobie
Brian Doran
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
Alasdair Laing

1. Governance

The Chairman reported that Alasdair Laing will be stepping down from the Board and Aquaculture Committee. The Board were sorry to hear of Alasdair's retiral, and recorded thanks and appreciation for the extensive time and effort he has committed to Fisheries Management Scotland. This will create a vacancy on the Board.

There will also be another vacancy on the Board, as Mark Bilsby, Dee has now taken up a new role with the Atlantic Salmon Trust. It was agreed that Mark could continue to represent the Dee until the AGM in November, but would step down from the Board at that time, and an election held to replace him.

It was agreed that both vacancies be dealt with at the AGM in November and the preparatory material for members to consider will be circulated in advance. **ACTION: BD/AW**

It was also agreed that in the instance where the Chairman was not present to chair a meeting, the Board would nominate a temporary chair from amongst themselves for that meeting.

1.1 Members' interests – declaration

Mark Bilsby reported that he has formally resigned from the River Dee and is now in position as Atlantic Salmon Trust CEO, and as recorded above, this creates the need for an election.

2. Financial & Administrative

2.1 Update & future financial governance

Paper 2.1 was circulated prior to the meeting and Brian Davidson highlighted a number of key matters on which Board approval was sought. The Board approved the following actions:

- Fisheries Management Scotland became incorporated on 29 January 2018, and the business from the previously unincorporated organisation was transferred into the new company at the Board meeting on 3 April. To account for the period of operation between 1 January and 3 April 2018 (prior to the business being transferred to the limited company), it was agreed that the Board would be content to use management reports to account for this period, rather than formal accounts. This was suggested as an acceptable way to report finances for this interim period by the accountants. **ACTION: BD/AW**
- To fully depreciate the assets recorded for Fisheries Management Scotland prior to 3 April 2018 (£273). Therefore no assets will be carried forward into the company accounts.
- To convene an AGM on 9 November 2018. This will allow the 2017 accounts to be formally considered and approved, agree 2019 subscriptions, report on the activities and deal with elections.
- To convene the 2019, and future, AGMs in spring, which will allow more timely consideration of the previous year's accounts and related business.
- To allow the existing 2018 budget to continue to operate until the year-end.
- To ask Atkinson & Company to adopt the role of Company Secretary.

The Board requested additional budget/spend forecasting as part of regular and ongoing financial updates. This is being undertaken. **ACTION: BD/AW**

A point was made about clearly identifying any external funds received which had been provided for an express purpose. This includes funds provided by Marine Scotland and Crown Estate Scotland. These are already specifically identified within the cashflow reporting, and external funding will be held in a separate bank account once new banking arrangements are completed with HSBC.

2.2 Future membership options for FMS

A paper on future membership options was presented and ideas were discussed about options for widening membership. An important aspect of this discussion was to ensure that the core

representative role undertaken by Fisheries Management Scotland for its current membership was not diluted.

The Board concluded that it is not the right time to propose changes to the membership criteria. However, it was agreed to keep this under review, in full consultation with the existing membership, in future. It was agreed that Fisheries Management Scotland should continue to promote the benefits of DSFB and Trust structure in places where they do not exist, and to help and encourage their development and integration into the network and membership of Fisheries Management Scotland.

2.3 GDPR

A paper was circulated prior to the meeting and Brian Davidson outlined the actions undertaken to demonstrate compliance with the regulations. These included the commissioning of legal advice for DSFBs and Trusts together with suggested data handling policies and privacy statements to meet the separate needs of DSFBs and Trusts. For Fisheries Management Scotland, a separate privacy statement and data handling policy was developed in conjunction with our legal adviser, and these are published on the website. An audit was undertaken of the electronic mailing lists and these were updated and rationalised. There was no further immediate action, but the data held and storage security will be kept under periodic review. **ACTION: BD/AW**

2.4 2017 Accounts

The draft accounts were circulated prior to the meeting. There was a deficit recorded of £5437, however this was within the budgeted use of up to £15K of reserves. There were no other points raised, and it was agreed to present these to the AGM in November for approval.

3. Policy

3.1 Aquaculture

Alan Wells provided an update.

Engagement with Parliament and Scottish Government - Fisheries Management Scotland gave evidence to two Parliamentary Committees, sat on the Farmed Fish Health Working Group and have now been invited onto the Interactions Working Group, which was announced prior to the meeting.

Potential funding support - Alan Wells has now met the SSPO Chief Executive, Julie Hesketh-Laird, on two occasions. The potential for funding for fisheries management remains on the table and the governance of any such funding remains as the key outstanding issue. Possible governance mechanisms are now being explored between Fisheries Management Scotland and SSPO.

Crown Estate Scotland - An outline proposal for Crown Estate Scotland funding to support two Marine Planning Officers has been made, with a view to providing supporting Fisheries Management Scotland members on aquaculture, marine renewables and other marine planning issues.

Interactions Working Group – this new group was recently announced by Scottish Government and the fisheries management sector will have two places, one of which will be Alan Wells. Given the history and failings of previous working groups involving wild fish/aquaculture, it was noted that this new group has to deliver tangible benefits for the wild fish sector, and the Board agreed.

3.2 Update from NASCO

Alan Wells attended the Annual Meeting of NASCO in Portland, Maine, and a verbal report was provided. A key benefit in attending NASCO is exchanging information with international counterparts and NGOs, and developing relationships with others – the value of this cannot be overestimated. A report of the meeting will be circulated with the next update to members –

ACTION: AW.

The Board discussed the future membership of NASCO following BREXIT in the light of the fact that UK membership is via the EU. Alan Wells was tasked to explore this further. **ACTION: AW**

3.3 Wild Fisheries Reform

A paper exploring the key priorities and suggested actions had been circulated before the last meeting and comments were invited by e-mail. Some comments were received, and these have been incorporated. The key points discussed were:

- **Finance** – The low catches in recent years, and in particular, the spring of 2018 were highlighted. These reduced catches will exert further pressure on local fishery management funding through the levy. There is a pressing need for a long-term strategy to look at a more sustainable funding mechanism. The Board felt that there is a need to consider how Scottish Government might be able to support core fishery management activity whilst recognising that such funding is unlikely to be reliable and there are risks in being overly reliant on it. The Board agreed that it is important to consider a range of options and it was agreed that it would be useful to identify key individuals who might be able to provide an independent analysis on future funding mechanisms. The Board were invited to make suggestions to Alan and these will be followed up either by Alan or in combination with Board members.

ACTION: ALL

- **National Wild Fish Strategy** – It was agreed that Fisheries Management Scotland should work with Scottish Government to move this forward – this will help define actions on a range of matters, clarify Scottish Government policy on key issues, and may help to identify and secure funding for the sector.
- **Licensing** – Fisheries Management Scotland have initiated discussions with Marine Scotland to start a review of the licensing system to ensure it meets the needs of Fisheries Management Scotland members.
- **Predation** – Fisheries Management Scotland recently met with SNH. SNH will consider further with Marine Scotland Science and Scottish Agricultural Science Agency to explore the potential of better addressing predation issues.

Alan Wells will take forward the various workstreams identified above, and wider issues relating to future legislation will be discussed at the next members' meeting. **ACTION: AW.**

Fisheries Management Planning

Alan Wells provided an update on thinking about a Fisheries Management Planning process. Fisheries Management Scotland have been developing thinking towards a consistent template designed to meet the needs of the sector, whilst also recognising the policy intentions of the Scottish Government. It was agreed that Alan would develop the template further with a view to discussing with the wider membership at the members' meeting in November. **ACTION: AW.**

3.4 Angling development

Alan Wells reported that £25K has been secured from Marine Scotland to take this project forward in partnership with Countryside Learning Scotland. Members have been invited to four regional meetings across Scotland, to explain the project in full, and to set up development regions, areas and catchments. Ian Robertson at Countryside Learning Scotland has committed 2 days per week to this project in year one. It will be important to ensure that this initiative links to the relevant section of future fishery management plans.

3.5 River Basin Management Planning - guidance for developers

Fisheries Management Scotland have been informed that the lack of a guidance/best practice document for protecting fish in rivers during developments, is potentially leaving our sector at a disadvantage in trying to protect fish species. This could be addressed by commissioning advice to develop such guidance. This is not an area where Fisheries Management Scotland staff have specific expertise, and it was agreed to consider options for funding some advice which could form the basis for guidance. **ACTION: AW to develop a proposal for the Board to consider**

4 Communications

4.1 International Year of the Salmon/FMS Annual Conference

The Board reflected on the 2018 conference and considered ideas for the future. Given that 2019 is the International Year of the Salmon, this might offer the scope for enhanced activity around the conference and generate wider interest amongst the international salmon community. The Board considered a number of key questions about what the annual conference strives to achieve. These include the need to identify the audience, the outcomes we want to see, messages we want to deliver and the overall purpose of the event. It was agreed that there should be a more fundamental look at what Fisheries Management Scotland and members want from the conference and design the event around these needs. It was agreed that convening the conference and members meeting together may not be the best option, as both events draw a different audience. This would be further discussed at the next Board meeting in September. **ACTION: AW/BD**

5 AOB

None.

6. Date of next meeting

Friday 5 October, Fisheries Management Scotland Office, Edinburgh