

# Fisheries Management Scotland

## Meeting minutes

28 March 2019



### Directors present

Richard Sankey (Chairman)

Alison Baker

Roger Brook

Douglas Dobie

Brian Doran

Lorraine Hawkins

Peter Landale

Mary Nicholson

David Summers

Bill Whyte

### In attendance

Alan Wells, Chief Executive

Brian Davidson, Director of Communications & Administration

### Apologies for absence

Chris Conroy

### 1. Welcome and members interests

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and invited any updates to members' interests. Nothing was declared.

### 2. Actions arising from previous meeting

**Simon McKelvey** – Alan and Brian had given some consideration to ideas for a memorial to Simon McKelvey, and these were summarised in a paper for the Board. It was re-emphasised, as noted at the January meeting, that any proposals would only be taken forward in close consultation with Lynn McKelvey. Initial discussions will be progressed with IFM. **ACTION: AW/BD/LH**

**Board meeting – September** – it was agreed to schedule the September meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> September at 11.30, Edinburgh

**Office move** – a smaller office had now been secured with Inigo in the same building, and there is no increase in cost.

**Ideas for future funding** – This action was carried forward – see 4.2. below.

**Director vacancy** – nominations for the trust representative vacancy on the board had been invited, and an electronic ballot will be organised following the deadline for nominations on

Friday 5 April. Board members were encouraged to discuss the vacancy as appropriate with representatives of Rivers and Fisheries Trusts. **ACTION:BD/AW/ALL**

**Companies House** – the confirmation statement was filed by Brian before the year-end deadline.

**Future vision for Fisheries Management Scotland** – This action was carried forward – see 4.2. below.

**Regional members' meetings** – A summary plan to deliver regional members' meetings was agreed. The importance of input from local interests was emphasised to ensure that the meetings meet local needs. A key priority will be to consider how the flow of information from Fisheries Management Scotland, via local DSFBs/Trusts, to local stakeholders can be improved so that information reaches all interested parties. In the first instance, Fisheries Management Scotland will aim to convene 3-4 meetings annually. **ACTION: AW/BD**

### **3. Financial & administrative**

#### **3.1. Financial reporting**

Members were content with the current level of financial reporting via the monthly cashflow reports.

#### **3.2. Appraisals process and implementation of a remuneration committee**

Whilst Fisheries Management Scotland has a process for appraisal and remuneration, staff have identified some gaps and requested that these were looked at further. A committee comprising Mary Nicholson, Brian Doran and Douglas Dobie agreed to look at the current provisions and make recommendations to the Board on remuneration process, appraisal process and associated conditions of employment. It was recognised that recommendations will need to be in place by June/July to allow any decisions to be built into budgeting proposals for 2020/21. **ACTION: AW to provide MN with relevant contractual and other documents to initiate the process.**

### **4. Policy**

#### **4.1. Staff update and priorities**

Alan Wells and Brian Davidson provided an update on a range of policy priorities for Fisheries Management Scotland.

#### **Enforcement training day – Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service & Police Scotland**

A training day to raise awareness of fish crime and poaching was delivered by Brian Davidson and several Fisheries Management Scotland members at the Tay DSFB office. The event was organised to build on the good relations with COPFS/Police Scotland and to ensure that the police and procurator fiscal service have a better understanding and recognise the importance of fish and fisheries crime. It is believed that, in the longer term, an improved understanding within these agencies will help achieve a higher success rate with cases. The day was well attended, with 4 procurator fiscals (including the Head of Wildlife and Environmental Crime Unit at COPFS), 6 wildlife crime officers from Police Scotland and 7 enforcement experts from the DSFB network (Tay, Spey, Dee, Forth and River Tweed). The event covered a range of areas, including:

- a presentation on the composition and role of the DSFB enforcement network and the current activities of bailiffs and local issues;
- key strategic issues relating to fish crime, such as case success and fine levels;
- the life cycle of salmon and enforcement 'pinch points';
- a tour of the hatchery to see various life stages of salmon and their significance;
- some scenarios relating to freshwater and marine legal and illegal methods of fishing, including exhibits and outdoor demonstrations relating to netting and rod and line activity.

The feedback received was very positive and both COPFS and Police Scotland felt that the event was very valuable in providing a greater understanding of fish crime. Both agencies are keen to learn more about local enforcement priorities, and to that end Fisheries Management Scotland will be liaising further with police Scotland/COPFS and with members to host local/regional training days. A further opportunity will be to ensure both Police Scotland and COPFS are represented at the annual bailiffs' seminar which is scheduled for late 2019. **ACTION: BD**

### **SEPA engagement**

Alan has been in regular contact with senior officials at SEPA with a view to improve understanding and coordination between SEPA and fisheries managers to ensure that the needs of fish and fisheries are fully taken into account in all decision making. Alan has also contributed to the various SEPA sector plans during the consultation process for these plans. Alan is seeking further strategic discussions, to better understand how the process will work in future.

### **Aquaculture – Interactions Working Group**

Both Alan and Roger are active participants in this key group and have taken a very proactive approach. Fisheries Management Scotland have tabled a number of papers to set out the policy approach agreed through the Fisheries Management Scotland Fish Farming Committee. Marine Scotland has committed further support to Fisheries Management Scotland projects, including salmon post smolt monitoring at Ardnamurchan. Marine Scotland have also confirmed continued funding to support a second year of sweep net work to monitor sea lice burdens on wild sea trout.

## **4.2. Process for developing strategic vision and funding**

It was agreed to set up a small group to consider, with the possibility of co-opted expertise, a future vision and opportunities for broader funding. It was recognised that DSFBs and Trusts are already under considerable financial pressure due to the current state of stocks, and this will have implications for supporting the essential work of Fisheries Management Scotland. The key questions will be to consider whether it is possible to attract external funding, with the emphasis on long-term and strategic investment in the sector. A key consideration will be to ensure that Fisheries Management Scotland does not compete with members for funding. Peter, Richard, Mary and Alan agreed to take these discussions forward. **ACTION: PL/RS/MN/AW**

### **4.3. Fisheries Management Planning**

This work is ongoing. A 'pressure tool' to identify and map key pressures for local managers has been piloted and we are awaiting feedback. Work on this will be prioritised for summer 2019. **ACTION: AW**

### **4.4. Guidance for developers**

Alan outlined a proposal to develop guidance for developers working in rivers. This will address an identified gap and will set out the legal requirements. A proposal has been developed by a consultant and it was agreed to circulate the proposal around the board for comment. The wider process for such contracts was also discussed, including the point at which such work should go out to tender. Following comment from the Board, it was proposed to take the proposal to the SFCC committee for discussion and agreement.

### **4.5. Fisheries Management Scotland response to 2018 catches**

Alan advised that he and Brian are taking advice on a range of areas to improve communications. One priority area is the strategy and proactive messaging associated with the release of the 2018 catch statistics in April. **ACTION: AW**

### **4.6. Salmon stocking**

Alan advised that salmon stocking activities are likely to come under significant additional scrutiny as Marine Scotland review their stocking policy. Fisheries Management Scotland are likely to be consulted on the new approach later in the spring. Concern has also been expressed about a number of recent press releases – Marine Scotland are aware of these cases.

## **5. Communications**

### **5.1. Annual Conference**

Planning for the annual conference was complete and registration is closed. The event will attract around 160 delegates, with around 70 for dinner.

### **5.2. Annual Review**

The review will be launched at the conference, with each delegate receiving a copy in their pack. It will also be launched digitally on the website and social media. The board members recorded their thanks to Gillespie MacAndrew who sponsored the 2019 review.

### **5.3. International Year of the Salmon**

As well as the conference, a number of projects will be delivered as part of the International Year of the Salmon. Fisheries Management Scotland will host an exhibition in the Scottish Parliament in May, and the '*What wild salmon mean to me*' project will also be launched on conference day (and augmented further throughout 2019). Video work to promote the work of members is also planned.

## **6. AOB**

**Missing Salmon Project** – Peter explained that a number of NGOs are coming together to form the missing salmon alliance – this will deliver co-ordination on a range of activities as part of the project. Whilst this approach was welcomed, it was recognised that Fisheries Management

Scotland has a number of areas to resolve and clarify about its future role, prior to considering the degree of engagement with the missing salmon alliance.

**Crown Estate Scotland assets** – Alison reported that the Forth DSFB Crown Estates proposal to manage assets is at stage two of the process. Should this proposal be successful, this will enable the Board to undertake direct control and management of Crown Estate Scotland fisheries assets in the region.

**Assessment process** – Alan agreed to check the scheduling of the local assessors revaluation process and whether this will continue to be conducted every 5 years. **ACTION: AW**

## **7. Dates for 2019 meetings**

19 June and 19 September