

Members' Meeting Draft Minutes

Tuesday 4th February, 2020, 15:30

Faskally House, Pitlochry PH16 5LB

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Apologies:

Antje Branding
John Armstrong
Keith Williams
Shona Marshall

Marine Scotland*
Marine Scotland Science*
Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries
West Sutherland Fisheries Trust

Present:

Jo Girvan
James Hunt
Pamela Esson
Sean Dugan
Paul Hopper
Marcus Walters
Peter Cunningham
Lorna Brown
Muir Glendinning
Struan Candlish
Kenny Galt
James Hunt
Patrick Barbour
Ronald Campbell
Tracey Thomas
Brian Shaw
Steve Burns
Sean Morrison
Lynn McKelvey
Rowan McCleary
Victoria Semple
Jackie Graham
Jamie Ribbens
Rowan McLeary
Debbie Parke
Chris Daphne
Alan Wells
Craig MacIntyre
Steve Hawkins
Alan Kettle-White
Gary Brown
Sean Robertson
Bob Loughton
David Summers

River Forth Fisheries Trust*
Tweed Foundation*
River Dee Trust*
Scottish Fisheries Co-ordination Centre*
Outer Hebrides Fisheries Trust
Deveron, Bogie, Isla Fisheries Trust
Skye & Wester Ross Fisheries Trust
Skye & Wester Ross Fisheries Trust
Ayrshire Rivers Trust
Ayrshire Rivers Trust
Tweed Foundation
Tweed Foundation
Tweed Foundation
Tweed Foundation
Marine Scotland Science
Spey Foundation
Spey Foundation
Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Cromarty Firth Fisheries Trust
Galloway Fisheries Trust
Galloway Fisheries Trust
Galloway Fisheries Trust*
Galloway Fisheries Trust
Galloway Fisheries Trust
Nith Catchment Fisheries Trust
Ness DSFB
Fisheries Management Scotland*
Esk Rivers & Fisheries Trust
Esk Rivers & Fisheries Trust
Argyll Fisheries Trust
Forth Rivers Trust
Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries
Findhorn, Nairn, Lossie Fisheries Trust
Tay DSFB

*SFCC committee member

2. Minutes of previous meeting, review of action points and matters arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as accurate and were approved.
JG announced PE is stepping down from committee.

3. Election of Management Committee

Sean Robertson joined SFCC Management committee with the appointment proposed by BL and seconded by BS.

4. Chairman's Report

JG emphasised that National Electrofishing Programme for Scotland (NEPS) work was challenging but very much worthwhile. One point to note was some days were wasted due to arriving at the site and realising the site was unfishable for some reason. There was also a positive opportunity to work together with Karen (MSS) to map areas that are unfishable to improve the situation for next year. FishObs is easy to use and leads to less mistakes when compared with data entry using the SFCC database. JG also highlighted that the Salmon Pressures project is up and running and thanked members for their contributions. Members have also taken part in a mapping exercise to plan the development of Scotland's network of fish counters.

5. Review of 2019 and proposed objectives for 2020 (Sean)

Highlights- SFCC gained 2 new members- Brora and Lochaber, made possible by member commitment and the slightly reduced subscription rate.

The salmon pressures tool process is running well and SD thanked members for significant contributions uploaded to date.

ACTION: SD to discuss with MSS the possibility of opening up the pressures tool again in the future, perhaps for an annual update.

Several training courses were organised during the year, many delivered by SFCC members- electrofishing; team leader; freshwater pearl mussel; barrier assessment; drone workshop; and SD ran a field mapping course. SD canvassed interest in future training courses.

SFCC 2020 priorities- Salmon pressures tool; training program dependant on demand; storage for electrofishing data; review for all fish data storage.

An open discussion was had regarding next steps:

AKW enquired around any new database options and the ability to compare electrofishing results against the national benchmark.

A discussion on drone training was had- demand, legality, insurance, registering, law change in June.

ACTION: SFCC (through SEPA) to help push awareness of any green engineering days/courses.

The need for GDPR training was raised; JG mentioned that there is an online course available.

Members discussed PVG (Protection of Vulnerable Groups) training to enable working in education and schools.

ACTION: JG to investigate the possibility of online PVG courses through STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths).

The SFCC Electrofishing training review was discussed. MSS contribution was delayed due to the workload of NEPS. There is a need to ensure that we do not have 2 diverging protocols (SFCC and NEPS).

JH suggested that 5 years is too long for the team leader refresher. AW relayed that Brian Davidson was developing an online refresher for enforcement. JG proposed a potential solution that the team leader refresher be online every 3 years and in person every 5 years. Cost and regularity of training every 3 years is an issue for members. It may also be difficult to attend courses if only one date per year is offered. Most contract work requires an up to date certificate- difficulties presenting expired certificate.

6. Financial Statement

SD displayed the SFCC cash flow report. A slightly larger contribution was provided by Scottish Government thanks to Simon Dryden. The financial constraints of members were recognised and a reduced subscription rate applied.

7. Proposed budget for 2019-20

The draft budget for 2020-21 was presented. In summary, if all planned spending is actioned a deficit of ~£10,000 (from reserves) is proposed. This assumes £5,000 set aside for database development

and £4-5,000 set aside for training delivery and data collection protocol development. Protocol/guidance development work could be commissioned by members on a day-rate. Members called for work to be done by SFCC on mobile field data recording for INNS; redd counting; culvert/barriers.

8. SFCC Electrofishing Database

SD briefly described the uncertain future for the SFCC database, as summarised in a written letter to all members. SFCC and other similar customers are left with a timescale of months rather than years before ongoing support is to be removed. A number of potential options are in the balance including 1)- EMIS to sell SFCC database to a new 3rd party and 2)- The database software system may potentially be bought out by a small consortium of customers including SFCC. JG stressed that SFCC members' data is secure and backed up.

Members agreed that SFCC should not reinvent the wheel by building a new database from scratch. FishObs is an efficient and effective solution which would meet members' needs. Members shared a range of views on issues such as habitat data and EIR/FOI. The SFCC database can store detailed habitat data but FishObs lacks this element. BL highlighted the need for a strong strategic partnership with MSS. SD noted that there is an upcoming meeting regarding database future and a Scottish Government rep from the user group is attending the meeting.

ACTION: SD to organise meeting with Antje Branding and Iain Malcolm to discuss future FishObs options.

9. AOB

There were no items of AOB.

JG thanked everyone for taking the time to attend the meeting and highlighted the importance of promoting discussion.