

MINUTES

Of the Meeting of the
River Cree District Salmon Fishery Board
Held at The Belted Galloway, Newton Stewart
On Wednesday 18th April 2018 at 5.30 pm

Present

(A) Board Members/Mandatory

Terence Flanagan – in the Chair

Duncan Baillie
Murdo Crosbie
Jim Davidson
John Galloway
Gene Fryatt
Norrie McIntosh
Iain Service

(B) Attendees

Jamie Ribbens (GFT)
Matthew Pumphrey (Clerk)

(1) Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Jamie Hyslop, Billy McHarg, George McShane and Steve Smith

(2) Minutes of the Meeting of 24th January 2018

These were approved without demur

(3) Matters arising from the Minutes of 24th January 2018

Jamie Ribbens reported that GFT had put in an objection to the Forestry Commission concerning the Carrick Mill Burn planting scheme. He undertook to advise the Board of any developments about the FC's proposals generally.

The Chairman reported that he had made representations to the Scottish Government opposing the proposed re-introduction of beavers. He had received an acknowledgement.

There were no other matters arising which would not be covered by later items on the Agenda.

(4) Chairman's Report

Terence Flanagan reported that the first salmon caught in the new season was an 8lb salmon by Jimmy McInnes on 7th April 2018. The RCHHT Trophy had been presented to Jimmy on 13th April 2018.

The Conservation Code had now been amended and was on the Board's website

There were ongoing discussions with the Forestry Commission about access for electro-fishing non-stocked sites. Jamie Ribbens said that GFT had not yet applied for permission for access.

(5) Treasurer's Report

In Billy McHarg's absence the Chairman summarised the written report that Billy had given him. There was a seemingly healthy credit balance of a little over £3000 as at 31 March 2018 but this did not, unfortunately, portray the whole picture. Neither the Treasurer nor the Clerk had been paid their fees for the previous year and there could be a cash-flow problem in the next few months. The Chairman would ask Billy to bring a financial projection to the next meeting since it seemed to him that consideration would have to be given to increasing the rate poundage in order to balance the books.

It had been noted that Tom Kenyon had not paid his subscription which was most unusual. A polite reminder would be sent.

Enquiries were being made as to the insurance cover afforded to the water bailiffs.

It had been proposed that the Board should advertise for "River Watchers" but the Chairman would ask Billy to check the insurance position before any advertisement was made.

(6) GFT Report

Jamie Ribbens reported on the concerns felt generally for fishing in Galloway about the targeting of South West Scotland for planting by the Forestry Commission of between 10,000 and 15,000 hectares. Jamie Ribbens had arranged a meeting with the South West Conservator. The problem arose as a result of a shortage of timber nationally. The previous policy of 5 year cycles was to be dropped. The FC were in the throes of a major restructuring.

Jamie Ribbens reported on the collection of data for Marine Scotland's classification for the Luce and the Bladnoch. It was proving more difficult than first thought and was in its early stages.

A meeting had been arranged with SEPA to discuss the Glenhead Burn.

Norrie McIntosh asked about the flooding problems and the Sparling Bridge. The Chairman said that the Board's statutory remit did not include flood prevention and that it was really up to individual proprietors to make representations if so minded. It was felt that it would be nice to be kept informed as to what was going on. It was agreed that where anything including flood prevention was likely to affect the fishing on the river then the Board should be informed and should be entitled to make representations. Norrie McIntosh felt that the Council should have consulted the Angling Association. A digger had gone into the river without notification which was unacceptable but the Association had received an apology.

(7) RCCHT Report

Murdo Crosbie circulated a handout which was duly addressed by him and considered by the Board. Murdo Crosbie said that, although it had been one of the coldest winters for many years, the water temperature was now warmer than at the same date last year and development of the fry should now speed up. The report detailed forestry work carried out on the Eldrick, Pilnyark and Fardin burns, bird scaring activities and electro-fishing surveys on the Upper Penkiln Burn. He hoped to arrange dates in May and June for school visits including taking the schoolchildren out fishing.

(8) Fish-eating Birds

The licence had been issued at the end of March which was considerably later than what had been envisaged at the January meeting (early February). SNH had apologized for the delay. The licence was for 5 goosander and 4 cormorants. The Chairman explained that these were slightly down on last year because of a slightly lower bird count. Murdo Crosbie said that he had seen fewer cormorants this year.

(9) Wild Fisheries Reform

The Chairman reported that there was a cash incentive for Boards to amalgamate. £50,000 was on the table. After some discussion during which Jamie Ribbens said that the money would have strings attached to it, it was unanimously agreed that this should be pursued no further.

(10) AOCB

The Chairman mentioned that he had circulated a proposed consultation on salmon farming. He considered that the Board should respond to the consultation. This was unanimously agreed. A sub-committee consisting of the Chairman, Murdo Crosbie and Jamie Hyslop was duly tasked with considering the proposals and responding to the consultation. There was no other business which members wished to raise.

(11) Date of next meeting

18th July 2018 at 5.30 at the Belted Galloway.

The meeting closed at 6.30 pm

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Chairman